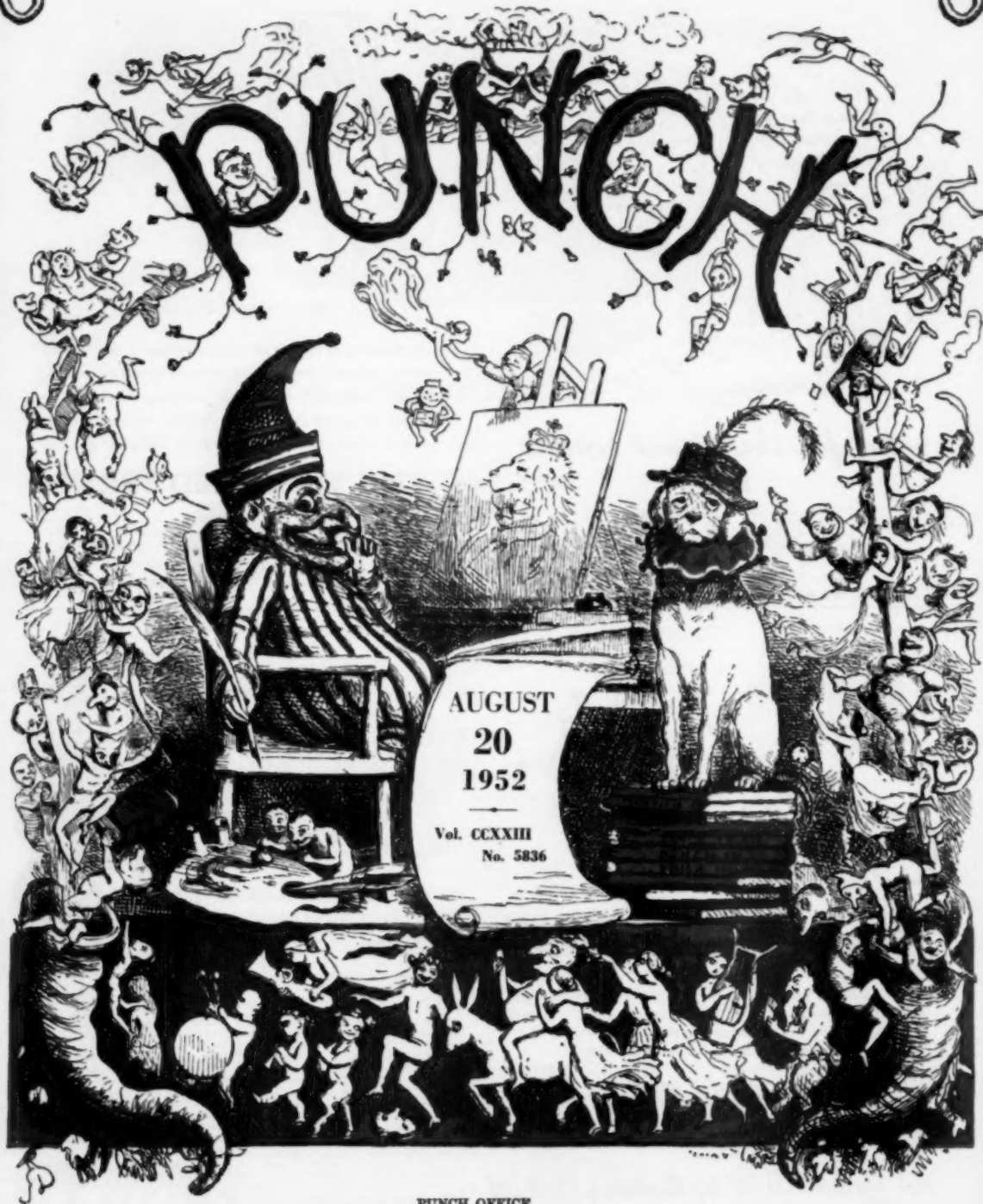


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PUNCH OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI—WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20 1952

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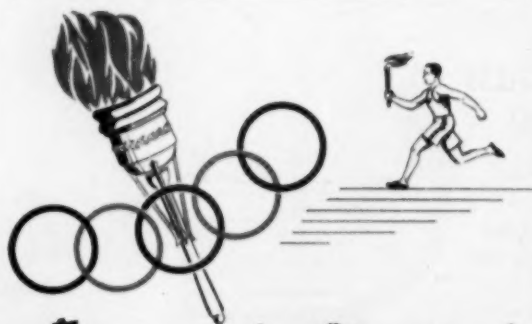
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Fire and the Olympics!

The Olympic torch has died low and records made must stand unassailed for four more years. But the flames of destruction will continue and those who would reduce fire loss in industry must strive without respite. In this fight against fire the Grinnell Automatic Sprinkler, the "Mulsifyre" System of extinguishing oil fires, "Simplex" Fire Extinguishers and M & P Fire Resisting Doors form a team which is "winning gold medals" creating...

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the Father of British Racehorses pulled a water cart in Paris?

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A PROUD SPIRIT. The King's grooms however found the stallion wild and untameable and in an attempt to break his proud spirit had put him to pulling a vegetable cart for the head chef at Versailles. When even this failed to subdue him, he was sold to the water carrier who had tried to starve him into submission. Mr. Coke sent the horse back to England where it was nursed back to health. On its owner's death, the horse passed to his friend Lord Godolphin.

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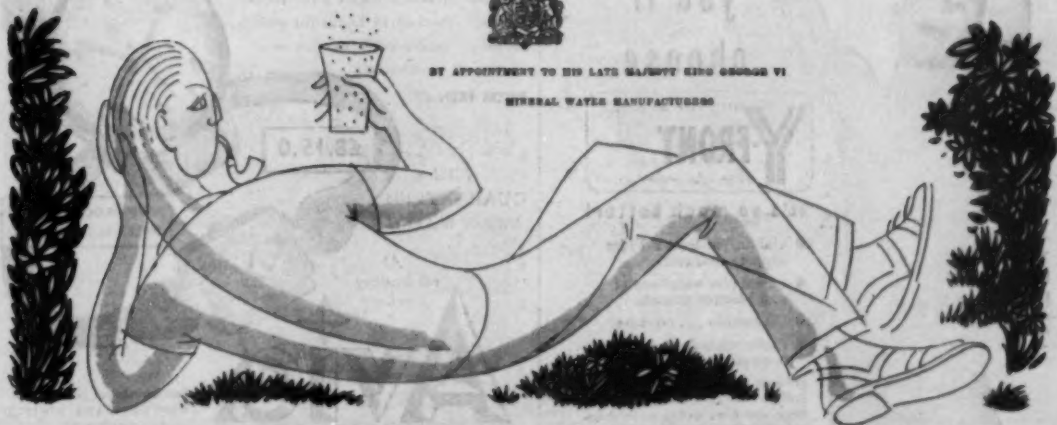


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Apry (Apricot Liqueur) or Anisette?

For every bon vivant who likes a dash of "Apry" in his fizz and Lillet there's another who prefers a dash of Martini Brizard Anisette. Yet a third school of thought insists that the simplest and best cocktail is 2/3 Gin, 1/3 Lillet and a squeeze of lemon peel. Which of all these makes the best aperitif? Try them and give the decision.

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with a wonderful new secret

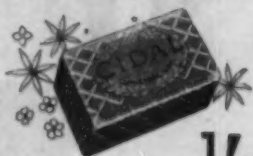
This is news about an entirely new toilet soap—CIDAL. Important news because this soap can benefit your health, looks and personal freshness.

CIDAL is a high-grade, triple-milled toilet soap, kind to the most delicate skin, with a light, fresh scent approved by men as well as women. But what makes it so different from other soaps is the fact that it contains Hexachlorophene. Because of this, CIDAL purifies your skin in a way never possible before with a soap—purifies your skin so that it is as clean as a surgeon's hands before he starts an operation!

When you wash with CIDAL the skin is so cleaned that bacteria almost cease to exist on it and CIDAL keeps the skin protected between washings. When you bath with CIDAL it gives you all-over freshness that lasts because, in a natural way, it gets rid of the bacteria which ferment

perspiration and cause unpleasant body odours.

Once you have tried CIDAL Soap you will always want it in your bathroom. Its purifying action clears the skin and helps women and men alike to have good complexions. It purifies the skin of children of all ages, keeping them free from minor skin troubles. It ensures bodily freshness every day. Ask for CIDAL at Boots, Timothy Whites, and many other good chemists. If you cannot obtain CIDAL, write for a free sample enclosing the name of your nearest chemist.



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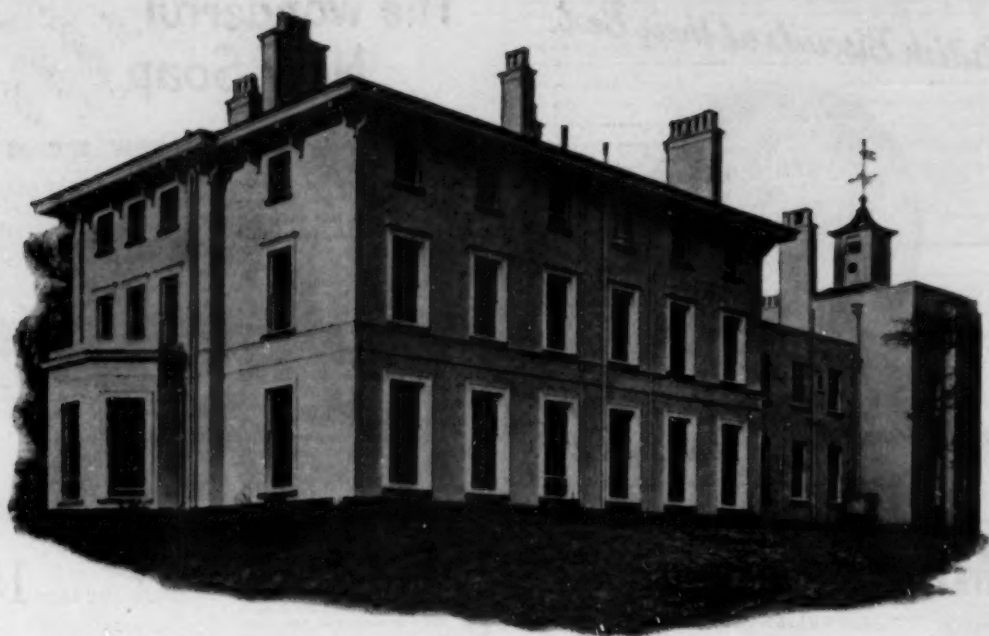
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TO WOMEN— about BANKING

We would not offer advice on the fine points of women's part in house-management—but it is in our province to suggest that house-keeping is made easier with a banking account.

Many women keep an additional "House Account" for housekeeping purposes alone. You may not need two bank accounts, but we do suggest you make full use of one; let National Provincial Bank look after your financial records and leave more of your time free for those things with which we cannot help.

NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK LIMITED

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This is a good Pink gin. Secret recipe?

No, just Seagers and a dash of Pink.

Praps it's the Pink.

No, it's the Seagers.

What difference does Seagers make over any other gin?

I haven't a notion

Seems odd that it should make all that difference to a pink gin.

I daresay. But the proof of a cocktail's in the drinking.

**Seager, Stone & Co. Limited,
The Distillers, London, E.C.2**

"It's a pretty
regular trip
with me and I
do like comfort"

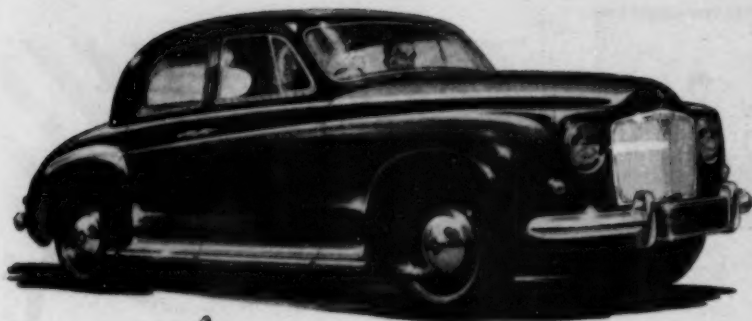


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to the late King George VI
Manufacturers of
Land-Rovers
The Rover Co. Ltd.

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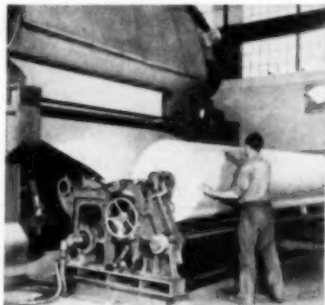


*The Toucans aren't loquacious birds—
Their beaks are just too big for words.
Guinness, they say, is good for you;
So why not see what toucan do?*



EARLY IN THE 1890's, Commander Henry Bradwardine Jackson — knowing nothing of the work of Marconi — first conceived the idea that torpedo boats might announce their approach to a capital ship by the use of wireless waves. In 1895, in the torpedo-school ship 'Defiance' at Devonport, he began secret experiments on Admiralty instructions. Before the end of the year he had succeeded in transmitting, from one end of the ship, signals of sufficient intensity to ring an electric bell in the receiving circuit at the other. After meeting Marconi, who first visited England the following summer, he went rapidly ahead with the evolution of naval wireless telegraphy, making vital contributions to the development of world communications.

The tempo of modern life has certainly quickened since 1895, when Albert E. Reed first developed the production of super-calendered newsprint. In the reclaimed straw paper mill he had acquired the previous year, his first machines produced but six cwt. of paper an hour. Compare with this the six tons an hour reeled off the modern high-speed machines in the great Aylesford mills of the Reed Paper Group — their continually-expanding production including newsprint, kraft and tissue papers. For to-day the Reed Paper Group with its great resources and technical experience is one of the largest paper-making organisations in the world.



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"Andes"—Buffet Luncheon
by the Lido Swimming Pool

The feeling of freedom from care; the relaxation of mind and body so noticeable while at sea; the exhilaration that comes from sailing out of the English winter into South American sunshine; the interesting and lovely cities—all this and so much more can be yours on a Round Voyage to Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina via France and the Peninsula. Remember, too, that you use the "Andes" or "Alcantara" as your hotel during the 6-8 days in Buenos Aires.



"Andes"
Sunbathing on Deck



Nowadays the car that's made in England seldom stays in England. It's quite likely to go to Lapland or Labrador—to face very un-English temperatures—twenty, thirty, forty degrees of frost!

So the maker of car engines, if he's thorough, tests them in savagely low temperatures. And the maker of car parts like carburettors and electric starters does the same. Refrigeration helps the car industry. And the car accessory industry. And many more industries than most people realise!

If you've a cooling problem, consult

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To keep fit
and fresh
take ENO'S

Pleasant, refreshing ENO'S "Fruit Salt" is the gentle corrective most of us need to keep the system regular. ENO'S is particularly suitable for children—and for anyone with a delicate stomach.

ENO'S will safely relieve over-acidity, a most frequent cause of indigestion, heartburn and flatulence. "Fruit Salt" is soothing and settling to the stomach upset by unsuitable food or drink.

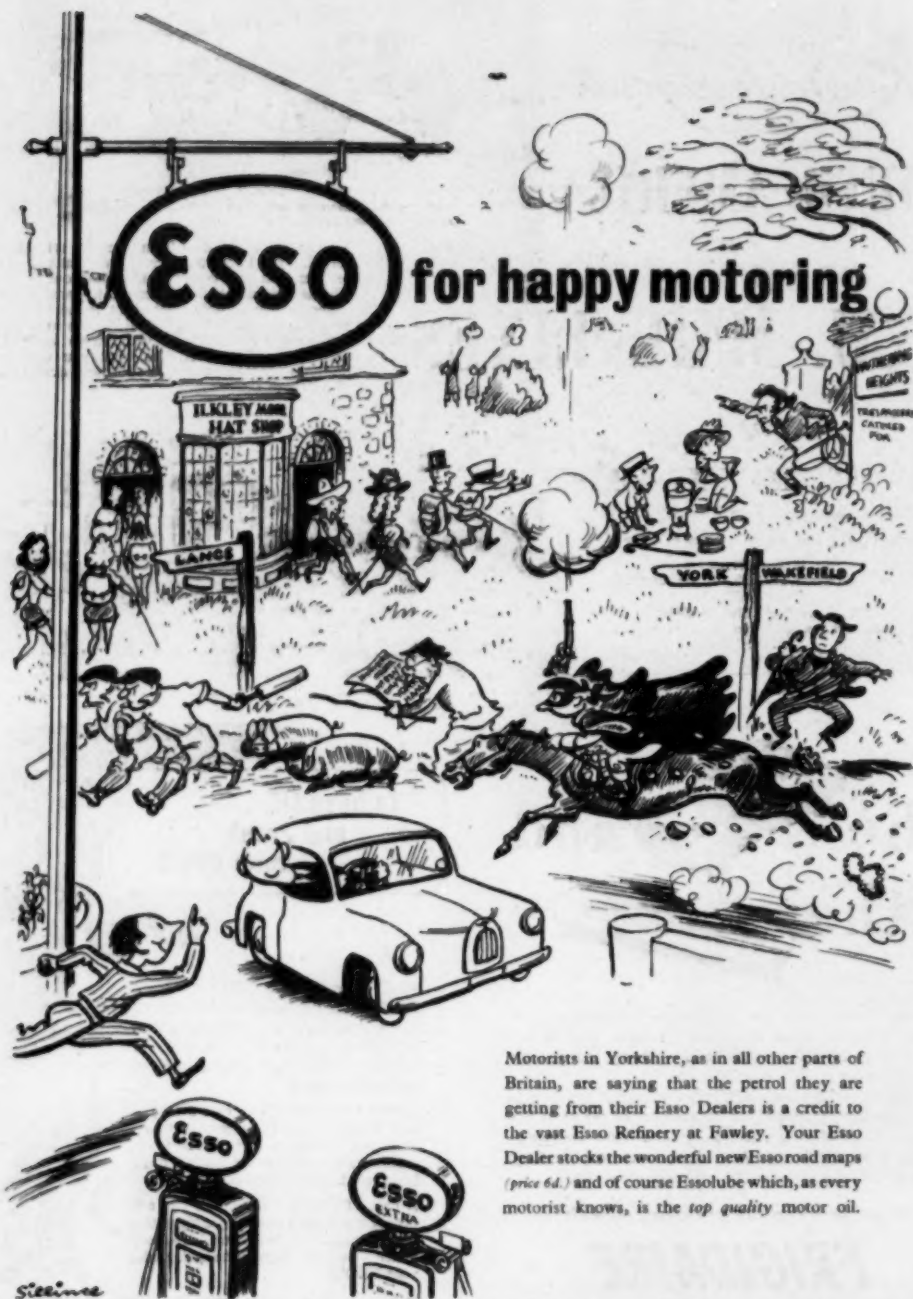
A dash of ENO'S "Fruit Salt" at any time of day makes a sparkling, invigorating health-drink. To feel better—and look better—keep fit, fresh and regular with your ENO'S.



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THE GENTLE ANTACID LAXATIVE

3/6d. Regular Size—Family Size (double the quantity) 4/6d.



Motorists in Yorkshire, as in all other parts of Britain, are saying that the petrol they are getting from their Esso Dealers is a credit to the vast Esso Refinery at Fawley. Your Esso Dealer stocks the wonderful new Esso road maps (price 6d.) and of course Essolube which, as every motorist knows, is the *top quality* motor oil.

Esso PETROLEUM COMPANY, LIMITED, 36 QUEEN ANNE'S GATE, LONDON, S.W.1



THOUGH the Parliamentary recess is only a week or two old there are many of us who already detect an uninspired flatness about national life. We look forward with impatience to the excitements of the new session, when our thrills of high courage at Alerts from Mr. Winston Churchill will once more alternate pleasantly with our waves of blessed relief at All Clears from Mr. R. A. Butler.

"General Clark, the United Nations Commander-in-Chief, to-day sent the following message to President Rhee:

"Please accept my most sincere congratulations upon your re-election as President by the overwhelming majority of the people of Korea. The free democratic peoples of the world have long had before them the inspiring example of your fight for freedom and independence."

South Korean police have arrested Hong Chong-il, editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Chosun Il Bo*, for publishing a report alleging that the Bank of Korea was printing money for use by Mr. Rhee's supporters in his election campaign. The police investigation bureau said . . . —*The Times*

Let's see, now. What was that First Freedom, again?

A sidelight on the state of unrest in Persia is to be discerned in the news that local authorities in Teheran are having trouble with a group of Dr. Moussadik's supporters who repeatedly take down the name-plate on Churchill Street and substitute another renaming it Mossadegh Street. The operation having now been carried out three times, and the local authorities having each time taken down the Mossadeg

name-plate and reinstated the Churchill, there is at the time of writing a slight lull, during which the Mossadeg group is thought to be engaged in its usual wrangle about the next version of the spelling.

"Clothes hung out to air above a gas stove blazed when a pan of fat caught alight at a house in Powis Square, Brighton. Hove firemen quickly dealt with a small fire in the refrigerator of a house in York Avenue." —*News item*

Handier to get at, probably.

Hairdressers are now offering for sale a lotion to rub into the face before using an electric razor. It only needs some enterprising manufacturer to produce a brush to rub it in with and the morning routine will be getting back to something like normal.

One way of getting more British goods into America would be to put them up as sports prizes.

One of three seven-year-old triplets at Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, has received a form from the Commissioners of Inland Revenue demanding details of her income, but neither of her little brothers



got one. It seems odd that a Government department should miss a completely unchallengeable opportunity to insist on triplicates.

Official invitations to participate will emphasize that just turning up the radio isn't good enough.

From a cyclists' handbook:

"It must be admitted, at the outset, that spells of wet, windy, or dull weather recur throughout the year; that the weather of this country often changes swiftly, so that no cyclist can expect always to avoid inclement weather. Many a fine morning is but the herald of a stormy afternoon. It is a commonplace that the English climate is incalculable. Such facts must be faced. The canniest of riders, keeping the sharpest of eyes upon the barometer, listening keenly to the forecast given over the radio, cannot hope to escape all the sudden assaults of the weather. The wind may veer about, or clouds gather darkly, with disconcerting rapidity."

No questions.

As a departure from the traditional Street Party to celebrate next year's Coronation, one London borough is planning an "Entertain Your Neighbours" scheme.

Under "Sports Notices" an evening paper advertisement by an official of the Wycombe Wanderers football team invites applications to fill "Vacancies for first-class players, all positions." They're already fixed up, it appears, with the ball and the referee.

Week's Most Piquant Three-Penn'orth

"Hungry Ghost Raided Larder"
 "Snatched Churchill's Cigar"
 "Strangled His Mother"
 "Talking Mule Led Army to Safety"
 "Fought Championship Contest and Didn't Know It"
 "Wore Same Shirt Until He Made a Duck"
 "Earl Sold Into Slavery"
 "Kept Son Caged For Sixteen Years"
 "Sent Ships By Parcel Post"
 "Water Shortage Solved By Wolves"

Headlines in Tit-Bits

WADING AGAINST AUSTRALIA

OVER in the corner, nursing their tankards, Wilson and Southerby were hard at work. "I don't see," Southerby said, weighing his words, "that you can do without Simpson—against the fast stuff."

"Miller and Lindwall," Wilson agreed. "H'm." Then he leant forward, his face grave. "But who's to go?" he asked. "You wouldn't seriously suggest—"

"Sheppard?" said Southerby, putting his tankard down emphatically. "No!"

Nearer the empty fireplace, Trench was setting his port glass on the table with a delicate precision that was, in its way, no less emphatic. "The speculum," he said firmly, "is green."

"In certain lights," Mathieson agreed, with the reasonableness that made him so much disliked, "yes."

Deep in their leather chairs, midway between the two parties, Cole and Richardson lazily swirled their brandies and exchanged a look. "There is nothing more exhilarating," Cole said, "than other people's shop."

"So I am told," Richardson agreed. "Though, strictly speaking, shop is about one's trade or profession, and I doubt—"

"If shop it might be called that shop had none," said Cole, and took a quick sip to show that he neither expected nor desired appreciation.

"... Oh, if you want to see Greenshank," Mathieson was saying, "you should go up to Lancashire."

Southerby was talking about Trent Bridge.

"I suppose, Richardson," said Cole slowly, dragging his attention away with difficulty from Trench on the Sandpiper ("it never towers

when flushed"), "you never saw Greenshank at Trent Bridge?"

"Saw him get a century there, old boy—in 'thirty-six," said Richardson, playing up strongly.

"Funny," said Cole. "I thought of him more as a bowler. Greenshank. Fast, right-hand."

"Kent, anyway," said Richardson. "Never Test class."

They ruminated, appreciative of their own humour, while Trench, who specialized in water-loving birds, discoursed interminably on duck, and Wilson, on their other flank, argued forcibly for the inclusion of Wilson (J.V.).

"What about Pochard and Gadwall," Richardson suggested, "to open the bowling?"

"Gadwall," Cole repeated, savouring it. "Gadwall, yes. Good, stock fast-medium. Gadwall of Surrey."

"Notts," said Richardson firmly.

"Gadwall of Notts, by all means. But Pochard as a bowler, no. Pochard must be behind the stumps."

"I thought Garganey," said Richardson, intercepting a low return from Mathieson. "A wicket-keeper, if ever there was one."



Cole conceded the point, only stipulating that Pochard must be in for his batting. "About Number Five," he said.

"With Turnstone to follow?"

"Excellent. Bowls off-breaks at a pinch. Yorks?"

"Yorks."

"We must get down to this," said Cole, searching for pencil and paper. "Who's to be captain?"

"Ruff! Reeve! Godwit! Pin-tail! Smew!"

"Smew!" said Cole, supremely scornful. "Too old."

They were both enjoying themselves immensely.

"Tern," said Richardson, inspired. "J. Sandwich-Tern, of Cambridge and Middlesex. Number Six."

Cole's ecstatic "The only possible choice" momentarily halted Trench in his account of an enjoyable week-end at a sewage farm near Durham, and in the silence Wilson could be heard earnestly demanding who Southerby's leg-break merchant was going to be.

"... Dotterel, naturally," said Trench, resuming. "The white underparts could be clearly seen"—and Cole, taking his colleague's agreement for granted, wrote the name down. "Four to get," he said, "including an opening pair."

When the list was complete in the order of going in, it had, as Richardson insisted, quite an air:

KNOT (Surrey)

DUNLIN (Yorks)

SANDERLING (Lancs.)

J. SANDWICH-TERN (Cambs. and Mddx.) (Captain)

POCHARD (Kent)

TURNSTONE (Yorks.)

GARGANEY (Glos.)

DOTTEREL (Leics.)

RUFF (Somerset)

GADWALL (Notts.)

STINT (Essex)

It was annoying, when in the extremity of their exuberance the two of them took their team over to Wilson and Southerby, to be put so easily in their places. "Haven't you forgotten," said Southerby, running his eye down the list, "Pratincole, of Northants?"

H. F. ELLIS



RELATIVITIES

"A MAN wearing a fur cap, white dinner-jacket, zebra-striped shirt, luminous green tie, tartan trousers and blue-and-white shoes was arrested to-day on a suspicious person charge."

"What was he suspected of?"

"Possibly signalling an all-clear to Communist agents with that luminous green tie."

"Where was this?"

"Cleveland, Ohio."

"Curiouser and curiouser. I was under the impression that to dress like that was almost common practice in America. It's as if one read, under the dateline 'London, England,' 'A man wearing a hat with a hole in it where the crease starts, a jacket with pockets which could not be used because things put in them fell through the lining on to the floor, a shirt with patches at the

neck and corresponding pieces out of the tail, a tie with the wide end higher than the narrow end to avoid the worn part showing in the knot, trousers with transparent knees, and shoes with loose leather on the soles that slapped on the pavement as he walked was arrested to-day on a vagrancy charge.' If you arrested everyone in England who looked like that, or who looked *something* like it, you'd have your work cut out—though not more so, I should have thought, than if you arrested everyone in America who looked like your man in Cleveland, Ohio, or something like him. You would save yourself a lot of trouble, it seems to me, by taking a decision that for this purpose, if for no other, the two countries can be regarded as vast prisons-without-bars."

G. A. C. WITHERIDGE

PENS OVER EVEREST

IT is commonly supposed that men return from their exertions on Everest and similar eminences little the worse for their experiences, that they resume their old lowland lives without any period of maladjustment. This may well be true, but it cannot be denied that a climber's style as a diarist tends to be permanently affected by exposure and privation.

Mr. Jethro Cumberidge, a member of the recent Rydal Expedition to the High Pamir, has allowed me to study his daily jottings during the period July 5-10 when he was preparing his forthcoming book of memoirs. They make interesting reading and may possibly be of value to future climbers and diarists.

July 5. Awoke at the National Liberal Club, Stockport, and experienced exceptional difficulty in rising. Feeling of profound lassitude: disinclination to resume active civilian life. Probable that oxygen supply inadequate since window of bedroom open only two and three-eighths inches. Superb views of Stockport and district, suspension bridge, warehouses. Mercantile Trust Building blotted by banks of steam and smoke.

Pulled on shoes and traversed narrow col to bathroom. Found shaving difficult and laborious, but acoustics excellent. Easy descent in good time to breakfast. Rations adequate but unappetizing.

Met Andrews as arranged, offered to carry his pack along Station Road. Andrews worries me: he has lost much hair in last thirty years and his stride has become uneconomic. Not yet acclimatized?

Visited cinema and soon succumbed to exhaustion.

July 6. Another day wasted. Unable to move out all day because garments not back from cleaners. If this goes on we are done for.

July 7. Startled this morning while on short ascent to bank (Midland Penny) to hear passer-by mention "Cwm." May have been "come" or "coom" (dialect), but

exciting and evocative. Terrain to bank varied. Mixed broken cobbles to end of Hanchurch Place, screeslope to Skillet Street, tarmac-with-flints to corner of Westbourne Park. Shoes gave good grip throughout, though lace broke outside "Rose and Crown." Resisted almost overpowering temptation to extend short pause for repairs, and scaled steps to bank.

Withdrew ten pounds. Cannot last long at this rate.

July 8. Awoke with feeling of exhilaration and decided to start work on memoirs. Bought paper, pen, cigarettes, and smoked incessantly to keep away insects. Found breathing a little difficult.

Decided that feeling of exhilaration deceptive, prelude to complete breakdown. Rested until evening. Packed and unpacked repeatedly from force of habit.

July 9. Another lost day. This morning I had the misfortune to step on my sun-glasses while packing and unpacking and was therefore unable to work on memoirs. Sunlight in bedroom too strong. Made rapid descent to street and took refreshment, in nick of time, with Andrews.

July 10. A black day. Andrews reported splitting headache, eyestrain and extreme lassitude. Is this the beginning of the end? Another attempt to start work on memoirs failed. Packed and unpacked until lunch at "Rose and Crown." Food tasteless but sustaining.

Visited bank and held council of war with manager who reminded me of Sherpa Roskin. Situation as black as possible. Withdrew five pounds. Can't be long to go now.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

§ §

HEATED IMAGINATION

IN a heat-wave, the poetic imagination

Can greatly lessen our distress. As an illustration

We may, if we so wish,

Cool ourselves by concentrating on fish—

Not fish in conventional pools by conventional bridges

But fish in bits on plates on shelves in fridges.

Another image which affords us instant relief

Is beef;

Few things are as coldly stark as

A chilled carcass,

Cruising with its mercifully mute *confrères*

In the vicinity of attractive spots like Buenos Aires,

Combining the cool suggestions of deep seas

And deep freeze.

Alternatively, we may select, if so we choose,

Established anti-calorifics such as igloos,

Tempering our feelings

By thinking of licking their ceilings.

And even the iceberg, *vieux jeu* as a visual symbol,

Can serve, if our imagination is nimble

And is steadily fixed on the portion that doesn't show,

Which is eighty per cent, say four-fifths, as you possibly know.

JUSTIN RICHARDSON



CENTRAL LONDON

"Have you ever thought of trying something like this?"



"Mind if I smoke?"

OPERATION HOLIDAY

"MOST of our annual holidays," said Landrail, "are remembered in the family as 'the year when'; or 'the year of.' For example, there was the year when mother lost the keys. And the year of the leaking sun-tan oil. The context is usually one of disaster. This year things are going to be different. This year will be canonized as 'the year when everything went according to plan.' I am not," he went on, "lacking in the spirit of adventure, nor am I opposed to innovation; but when I set out for Worthing I prefer not to take in Wolverhampton en route. And when we reach our destination, it is pleasant to feel that we are all together, and that no adult has to return hotfoot to town to collect one of the twins."

"Since you are clearly prone to misadventures of this nature," we said, "how do you propose to armour yourself against them?"

"I shall issue an Operational Order," said Landrail, proudly. "Not for nothing did I serve my country in her hour of need. When they discovered that to allow me to tinker with aircraft was tantamount to putting the aeroplane industry on short time, they caused me to devote my energies to sweeping out the Orderly Room. To this happy chance I owe my knowledge of organization, which I shall now apply in the domestic sphere."

Which saying, he drew from his pocket a sheet of paper, and passed it to us for examination.

Operation Order No. 1

Ref.: HOLS/1/Org.

By H. LANDRAIL
Senior Member i/c Family
16th August, 1952

INFORMATION

That vacillating nincompoop Bredbin having at the last moment decided not repeat not to take his vacation until September, it is necessary for the Landrail family to proceed on holiday without delay.

INTENTION

To transport the Landrail family and its equipment from "Camelot," Oak Road, N.74, to "Villa Espinosa," Weedhampton.

EXECUTION

1. Organisation

- (i) The Landrail family will for convenience be referred to in this Order as "Crakeforce."
- (ii) "Crakeforce" will travel as a single unit, for a change.

2. Security

- (i) Destination of "Crakeforce" is not to be communicated to unauthorized persons, in particular not to the Grinleys, who would probably come down to see us at week-ends.
- (ii) The twins will be labelled.

3. Transport

- (i) "Crakeforce" will be uplifted by a unit of Kosy Kab Kumpany and taken to the railway station.
- (ii) "Crakeforce" will occupy the compartment booked for them at enormous trouble and expense, and no other.
- (iii) Entry to and exit from this compartment will be by the door provided.
- (iv) Corner seats (except those reserved for senior members) will be occupied in rotation.

4. Weapons

- (i) Spades, fishing nets, and other side-arms will be carried at the trail. As the loss of an eye is currently valued by the High Court in thousands of pounds, these weapons will not be carried at the slope or the high port in crowded places.
- (ii) Buckets, if carried, will be empty.

5. Catering

- (i) All ranks will be issued with the unexpired portion of the day's ration, and will make it last.
- (ii) No unauthorized departures from the train in search of food will be permitted.
- (iii) Oranges will be peeled and divided in the regulation manner. They will not be gnawed, or torn apart with the bare hands.

6. Liaison

The Second i/c will ensure that adequate



"He doesn't take to people readily.
Quite frankly, he's more of a dog's dog."

liaison is maintained with the units to whom copies of this Order are sent (see list).

7. Distress

- (i) Personnel who become detached from "Crakeforce" are to make every endeavour to rejoin their unit.
- (ii) Distress signals will be made by voice only. It is unnecessary to strike or trip up the Senior Member in order to attract his attention.
- (iii) The communication cord will only be pulled on the express instructions of the Senior Member, and then only if "Crakeforce" is irrevocably proceeding in the wrong direction.

8. Intelligence

All information, coming from unofficial sources, regarding train times, departure platforms, and the location of "Crakeforce's" equipment is to be treated with the greatest reserve.

9. Briefing

A final briefing conference will be held at 1800 hours on D minus one. All ranks will attend. (Bathing schedule for this night will be adjusted accordingly.)

ENEMY OPPOSITION

10. Deployment of Enemy Forces

As this operation takes place on a Saturday, heavy concentrations of enemy will be encountered at the railhead.

11. Enemy Weapons

- (i) "Crakeforce" must expect to encounter umbrellas, golf-clubs, and sharp-edged suitcases.
- (ii) Heavy mechanized forces, manned by the Panzer Porter Division of British Railways, may intervene in the mêlée. Certain elements of these troops may be found to be friendly towards "Crakeforce," in which case the equipment will be placed in their care.

12. Infiltration Tactics

The positions prepared for "Crakeforce" may be occupied in advance by enemy forces, in which case the Guard will be called into action.

AMENDMENTS

Amendments to this Order will be issued as and when things begin to go wrong.

(Signed) H. LANDRAIL
i/o "Crakeforce."

Distribution List:

Mrs. Margaret Landrail
Miss June Landrail
Master Edwin Landrail
Master George Landrail
Baby.

Copies to:

The North Thames Gas Board
The London Electricity Board
The Postmaster General
J. B. Thum, Newsagent
The Chalkwater Dairy Co., Ltd.
Old Mortality (real name unknown—our dustman—wears a sort of shroud)
Mrs. Cartle, 9 Bodger's Rents
Kosy Kab Kumpany.

G. H. M. NICHOLS



Hollwood

CURRENT ACCOUNT



Paris takes a holiday

NO one ever kisses his bunched fingers and murmurs "Ah, Paris in August . . . ravishing!" No song-writer bursts into rhapsodies. No one mentions the dappled woods, the flower stalls, the romantic river, or *l'Amour*. Paris in August, it must be confessed, is not herself.

No major events take place in the theatre or cinema. At Long-champs no pink geraniums bloom around the President's Tribune. The *Tour de France* cycle race is over. The charity fêtes have raised their final penny. It is the month of recuperation, the time when the citizens of Paris enjoy their *congés payés*.

"All life comes to a stop, you understand," remarks my hostess, sitting in great contentment on a backless chair in the courtyard entrance, shelling peas into her lap. "All the world, proletarian and aristocratic, goes north to the beaches or south to the sun."

The street outside is strangely

deserted. Six restaurants are closed. The Mermaid of Morocco displays the sign "*Fermeture Annuelle du Dancing, du Bar, du Cabaret.*" The pale boy from the reception desk has rolled his socks to the ankles, acquired an American haircut and cycled off to breathe the fresher air of the Vosges.

Monsieur Vasseur the baker has filled his delivery vehicle with children, relatives, six trunks, food for the journey and an inflatable boat. With his thumb on the horn and his beret pulled dashing over the eyebrows, he has vanished for the summer. In his window stands a neatly-penned card "*La maison est fermée jusqu'au 28 inclus.*" In case of urgency, the card adds, pray address yourself to Madame Benoit at number 56. *Merci.*

The milliner next door has left a similar message. "*Déposez tous paquets chez Madame Benoit à droite, s.v.p.*" He and his wife have ridden off on a tandem, heading for Porte Maillot, Route Nationale Fourteen and the windwept beaches. They are staying with an uncle at Veules-les-Roses—useless to spend money on hotel bills.

The fishmonger has gone to Alsace by motor coach, having thoughtfully supplied his amiable and faithful clients with a list of rival establishments open in the district.

"One must help one another. It is the law of nature," says my hostess.

In every quarter, from Billancourt to Clignancourt, one sees rows

of abandoned shops, shuttered, boarded up, barricaded by metal grilles and left in the care of the *Société Parisienne de Surveillance*.

In all parts of the city, from Montrouge to Montreuil, one sees solitary cats moping on bare counters. The dogs of Paris have departed with their masters, eager for the wet sands and rolling breakers, tongues hanging out with happiness. For the tabbies, the tortoiseshells and the common blacks there is no summer vacation. They are forced to endure the caresses of strangers and a month's unfamiliar cooking.

Not all the closed shops are empty. Occasional glimpses can be caught of fretful tradesmen hibernating in back rooms in annual idleness. Two days of tranquillity in the Loire valley were more than enough for Pascal the dry-cleaner. It is not difficult to detect the asperity in his "Closed for the application of the law relative to collective holidays."



On the last day of July and again just before the National Holiday on August 15, traffic streams along the main roads. Vans and cars lurch perilously through the suburbs, luggage piled on the roofs, perambulators and shrimping-nets tied on behind.

Long queues form in the booking offices of Air France. Railway trains run in triplicate. Cheerful travellers swarm into the stations—Boy Scouts in uniform, hobnailed climbers with picks and rucksacks, matrons in festive black, fathers in sober pinstripes, young girls in tight slit skirts and sleeveless blouses, children in Sunday sailor hats.

Jostling and joking at the platform gates, they await the



special cut-price trains and the more costly rapids and autorails which will transport them to Paradise. Unthinkable to remain in the capital when one has the means to escape.

For the less mobile citizens August is a month of hard labour. Pneumatic drills disturb the peace of rich hotel guests in the Rue Royale. Gas-fitters disappear down man-holes. Electricians crawl along tunnels with coils of wire round their shoulders. Attention is drawn to steam-rollers. Red-and-white poles are laid from kerb to kerb and the Rue Barrée and Fina de Chantier boards go up.

Road repairers sit whistling in the gutters, happy as children, chipping blocks of granite into cubic cobblestones and throwing pellets of bread at the pigeons. With loving care they pour tar from little wooden buckets which are an exact replica of the *seaux* used during the Roman occupation. Someone plays a concertina.

All Paris is in holiday mood. There is an indescribable air of gaiety as sunburnt youths in off-white vests knock down the walls of fine old buildings. Laughing with delight, they shout from rooftops and haul up bricks in baskets, urged on by bravos from spectators below.

"Myself, I have no time to stare at sideshows," says my hostess, padding along to the creamery in her beetroot-coloured cardigan and bedroom slippers. "An hour wasted is an hour lost."

She pushes through a mob of sightseers clustered round the florist's window. They are watching



a tense drama within. Two men in white skull caps are folding wall-paper on trestle tables and smoothing out air bubbles on the ceiling. It is quite entrancing.

Noses are pressed to the glass. A man in a chocolate velvet jacket snaps his fingers for joy. Farther up the street, *chez Piquet* the grocer, decorators are busy making squirrels in plaster with ordinary toilet combs. When they set about the ornamental cherubs with blow-lamps and spray-guns the audience catches fire with excitement.

"*Peinture fraîche*" is chalked up everywhere. The horses' heads over the *boucheries chevalines* glitter with new gilt coats. The big snail over *L'Escargot d'Or* shines like a golden beacon. Even the *Métro* is smartened up, the glossy tiles washed down, the posters peeled away and the advertising spaces filled in with rectangles of blue distemper.

Peak interest comes at midday. In full view of the public the craftsmen of Paris fetch out their tall green bottles of refreshment, their spotted sausage, their camembert and nourishing ham. Spent after creative effort, they sit smoking on step-ladders. Exhausted, they retire behind newspapers for well-earned siestas. There is no need to overwork. The butchers and bakers and retailers of crocodile handbags will not be back until September.

"It is, after all, the holidays," observes my hostess, returning with a can of milk and six hard-boiled eggs. "When the cat is away the little mice dance."

Not all the houses of commerce are, however, undergoing transformations. Many are in the thick of the *Fina de Séries* sales. In August businesses are liquidated, leases expire, proprietors are changed and

all stock has to be cleared at prices without precedent.

Windows are embellished with red streamers proclaiming "*Soldes au choix . . . Prix imbattables, atomiques! . . . Occasions (bargains) . . . Coupons (remnants) . . .*" After stocktaking an important rebate . . . Every franc counts." But few people come and buy and trade is never brisk.

"August is August," says my hostess with a shrug. "No one wants canvas sandals when the first prickly balls are falling from the plane trees. *La Meilleure Qualité au Meilleur Prix?* Not when the grey mists of autumn are already rising from the river."

In August nothing happens of any consequence. Young Existentialists no longer plumb the depths of inexperience over soft drinks at marble-topped tables. The pavement cafés are taken over by tourists. Gudgeon-fishers no longer



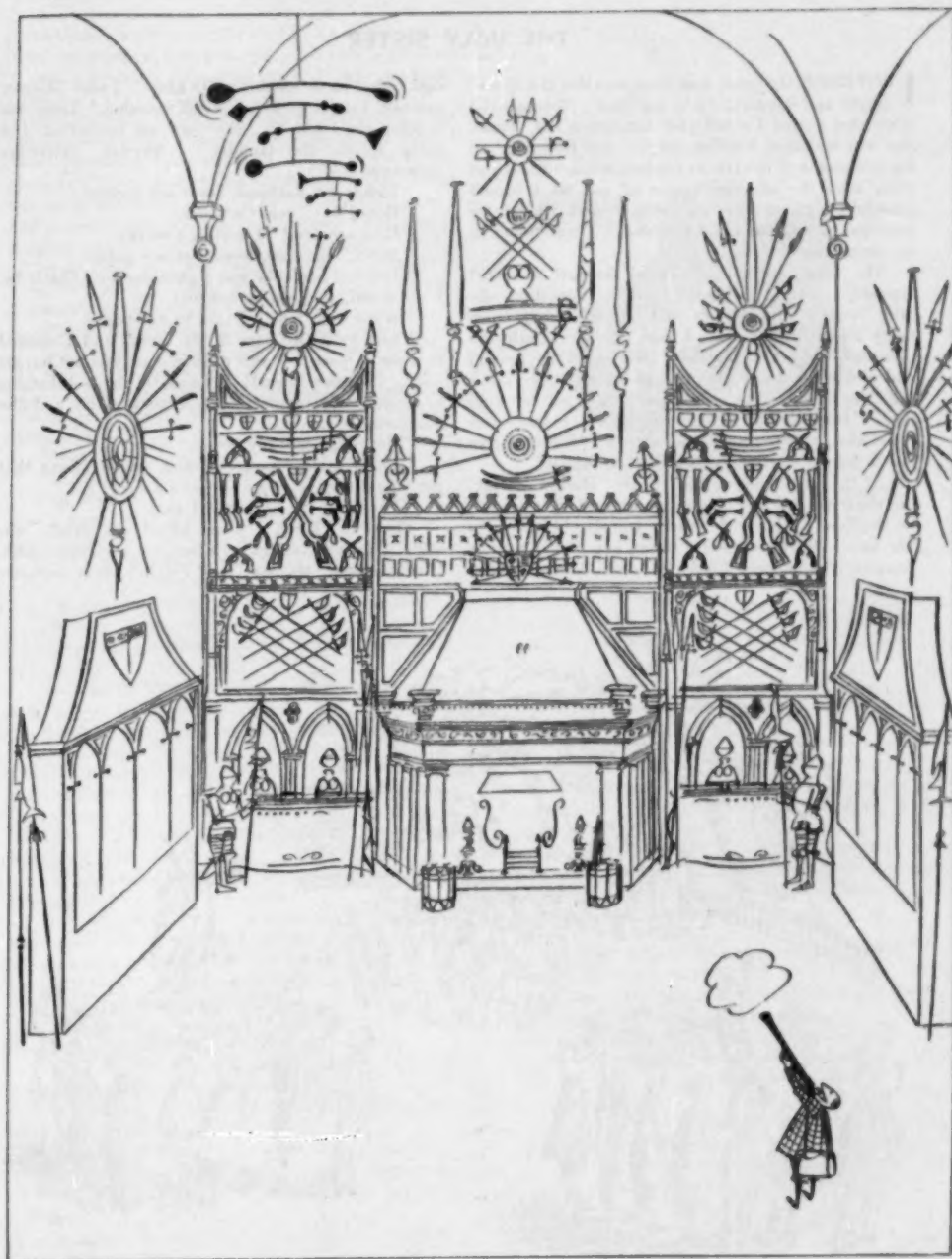
sit in little boats moored amid-stream. They are angling in other waters.

There is Assumption Day on the 15th, when every shop is shuttered, no newspapers are printed and the weather is notoriously uncertain. There is Liberation Day on the 25th, with gunfire, *apéritifs* of honour and usually a downpour of rain. Neither of the two holidays is a gay occasion. It is the off-season for amusement.

Even so, it is better to go to Paris at the wrong time than not to go at all. During the *clôture* one is allowed backstage. One sees the city in repose, relaxed but far from inactive, gathering strength for the next performance.

A. V. DAVIS





THE UGLY SISTER

I ENTERED the room, and there was this girl spread amply and comfortably in my chair. Through the thick blue smoke I could also distinguish my popsie. She was smoking, inhaling deeply, and frowning: all the symptoms of ten-tenths concentration. Neither of them took the slightest notice of me, so I leaned gracefully against the mantelshelf and waited for someone to ask me what the blazes I was doing in my own house.

The amply-spread girl leaned forward and said intensely: "Then she came to me. 'Carstairs,' she said, 'what's happened to that baby?' I said—very nasty and refined I was—I said 'To which baby do you make reference, matron!' She stood her ground and said without any elocution at all 'Carstairs, don't talk like a fool. Where's Roger?' I'd got her cold now. 'How should I know, matron?' I said—you could have cut it with a garden shears. 'But if you've lost a *baby* I'll willingly help you to find it.'"

At this point she saw me. I said "Hello" quickly, but she inhaled slowly, frowned, and touched my popsie on the knee. "Kid," she said, "you should have seen her face. Well, you know what it's like, but now imagine all that only *livid*. She said 'Carstairs,' she

said, 'what have you done with him?' I said 'Matron, you said I'd got to do ironing all morning.' There was nothing she could do. She went out muttering 'I'm going to do the laundry.' Anyway, yesterday afternoon—"

"This is my husband," said my popsie.

"How j'do?" said Carstairs.

"How are you?" I said, not caring.

"Ateful," she said, leering at my popsie.

I believed her. She was a phenomenon. Can it be, I wondered, that she is human?

"What's for tea?" I said to my popsie.

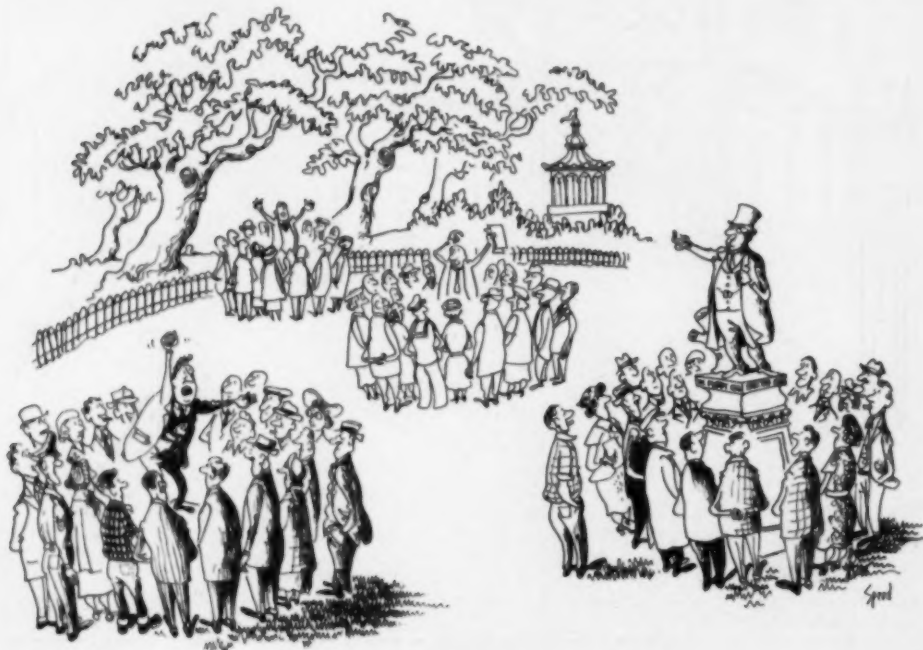
There were two eggs in the house, and I wanted to make it clear that this phenomenon was not having *mine*. Carstairs indeed! A name by rights belonging to empire builders, nineteenth-century novels, and film directors.

"Nothing," said my popsie.

"Never mind," said Carstairs, which meant that she would stay anyway. "Have a fag?"

"I only smoke hashish," I said.

She didn't laugh. "Can't afford 'em myself," she said. "Anyway, yesterday afternoon she came again. 'Griffiths is ill,' she said, as if I didn't know perfectly



well that Griffiths had gone A.W.O.L. to Anglesey. 'I want you to spend the afternoon on Tweenies. Take them a walk or start them fighting or something. Keep 'em quiet—and no iced lollies this time, Carstairs.' I said—glacial I was—'Matron, I am perfectly capable . . .'

On and on it went. I couldn't believe it. What did she do when she was alone? Did she keep a parrot? What happened when she went with a friend to the pictures? Then came the worst thought of all. What was her other name? Could it be that this sound-track had a name like Phyllis or Daphne? My morale snapped suddenly and I fled to the kitchen.

Some time later my popsie came. "Listen!" I whispered fiercely. "Get rid of her! I can't stand it. I couldn't eat my tea with *that* going on."

"With what going on?" my popsie asked.

"The voice," I said. "The broken record. What did you think I meant?"

"Oh, you are silly," said my popsie. "You think everybody wants to sit about and discuss Graham Greene."

"Why not?" I said.

"She's never even heard of Graham Greene."

"Of course she hasn't," I said, "because she hasn't stopped talking since she was twelve. Are you going to give her my egg?"

"What's the matter with you?" said my popsie. "Rose is a very nice girl."

I laughed so much that I fell against the dresser.

"You're acting like a fool," said my popsie. "Anyway, she just wants to see the baby and then she's going."

"Let me fetch him," I said. "You go and clear the smoke from the Y.W.C.A."

Butch was lying in his pram eating his feet. He was delighted to see me. "Bom bom bom," he said, which, translated literally, means "There exists within my consciousness an awareness of your excellence."

I carried him proudly into the house. There was a cessation of all dialogue while Carstairs took a deep breath.

"What a wonderful baby," she said. "Isn't he the most gorgeous thing in the world?"

Well, of course, he *is*. I must say that the girl understood and appreciated babies. If there is one thing an ugly girl should be it is honest. It gives her a quality that is unique, something the pretty girls can envy from a considerable distance.

"I've never seen such a marvellous baby," said Carstairs. "I can't believe that he's yours."

"He's not bad, is he?" I said. "With care and attention he should reach Cabinet rank."

"Shovel the food in," said Carstairs. "Nature and environment will do the rest."

The girl is brilliant, I thought. She concentrates whole welfare books into short, appropriate comments.

"Will you stay to tea?" I said. "You can have my egg."

"Thanks, kid," she said. "Did I tell you about my row with Ferguson?"



"Speaking . . ."

SONG OF THE HAIRY-SHIRTED

GLANCE, lady, from those shoes that primly shine,
Those ankles sleek in nylon,
Over to those rough socks and boots of mine!

Up where the chalk-paths curve 'twixt gorse and pylon

They won that dust so white on them, so fine;

These studs spark-struck the flint mile after mile on
Hills where the heart is light as winds are fleet—
Look, lady, at my feet!

Turn, man, that tailored shoulder; see my tweed,
Burr-stuck and bramble-rent,
Shapeless from high, light rains, stained with the weed

That was my pillow once on Pen y Ghent;
Pockets abulge with all a man may need

Who finds himself at evening well content
To have the moon for friend, the constellations
For his relations.

Ah, simple fellows we, who want no fuss;
But, as we limp aboard the welcome bus

Munching remainder crusts,
Do not politely look the other way;
Your envy pays the hardships of the day.

It is envy, one trusts!

THE COSMIC MESS

A CLASSICAL education is a glory and a help, but not all readers of *The Times* may have had one. This column wonders what some of them made of the following sentence in an account by the "Yachting Correspondent" of the first race for the Prince of Wales Cup (14-foot dinghies) in the Solent:

"It was the conspicuous luminary, H. F. Williams, who won yesterday's race; a victory not without dust and heat, however..."

* * * * *

This column is delighted to salute and congratulate the *s.s. United States*, and the men who designed and made and navigate her. But it cannot join in all the general excitement about increasing swiftness in ocean travel. The *Queens* were far too fast already. No sooner have you unpacked than you see a crowd of passengers outside the Purser's office, queuing for "landing-tickets." No sooner have you got used to the sea and the food, found your way about and made a couple of friends, than you are packing again. The great thing about a sea-passage (provided a chap or girl is not permanently sea-sick) is that it is a period of repose and refreshment. You have time to think, to relax; to cast off one Continent and prepare for the next. The objection to the almighty Air (with all its benefits)

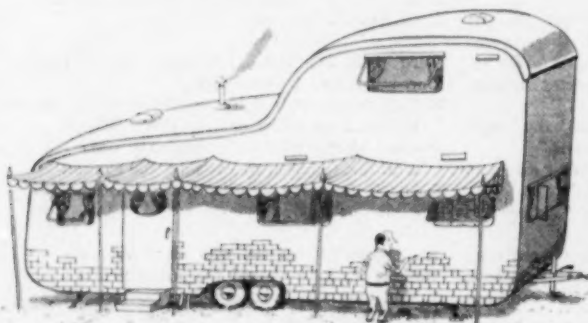
is that it provides nothing of the kind; you arrive in the other Continent breathless and shaken and short of sleep, like a parachuter. There is no gradual changing of gears. And now the sea is becoming as bad. Even the nice long runs across the Equator are being spoiled by speed: it used to be five weeks to Sydney—now, if this column's memory is in order, it is only four. If the Atlantic sea-crossing gets very much quicker there will be no point in taking ships at all and everyone will go by Air. If this column ran a shipping line it would call it "SLOW STEAMERS" and advertise in this way: "Travel by Slow Steamer. Relax and refresh yourself. More free food. More sea-air. And much less draught!" For in a ship going forty miles an hour, after all, you cannot go on deck without being in a Gale (by the Beaufort scale) even if there is no wind. Think of that. No, no, let us forget about Ocean Greyhounds and call them monster Sea Hogs instead. They are, or will be, wonderful in time of war, and they should be allowed, like motor-cars, their occasional frolics, races, "records" and what not; but in normal life they should be subject to a speed limit—say fifteen knots.

* * * * *

"Accent on Youth," of course. This column, being the father of four

flourishing columns, and grandfather of eight (the Prime Minister has only just caught us up) could not be suspected of being Anti-Child. But when it read the other day about a *Children and Young Persons (Amendment) Bill* it did sigh sadly (as many others may have sighed) "If only some of them could be amended!" The ancient lessons "Don't touch" and "Leave things alone" are, it seems, no longer taught in home or school. Mr. Bevan in the House of Commons not long ago described how he found a child in a museum about to scratch with a knife "a piece of Spanish mahogany." It is perhaps the same child, or his brother, who, if he sees a newly-painted boat on the foreshore, is impelled to clamber over it, ruining the new paint and leaving a trail of mud. He also throws boat-hooks and other gear overboard. If he sees a rubber buoy he has to throw stones at it, and, if that does no damage, to stick a knife into it. If he is tall enough to reach a window-box he grabs a few flowers. The "style" of the sundial in the new public park is wrenched from its foundation. Street-lamps, rows of them, are smashed with catapults; red safety-lamps on the highway are removed. Boats passing under bridges are not merely spat upon in traditional style but stoned with gravel, if any gravel is handy.

All this is understandable, no doubt, for property, not only private but public, is now a crime. The dear little fellows are showing the spirit of adventure which still beats in the heart of every, *etc., etc.*, we shall be proud of them one day, *etc., etc.* We should be thankful they are only breaking street-lamps or scratching Spanish mahogany in museums. They might be slashing other boys, frightening old women, or holding up grown men in the streets with their dear little pen-knives. And, anyhow, we must not forget the innumerable good deeds done by Boy Scouts every day, and the millions of excellent children whose



LA RUE PETIT CHANSON DE TABAC

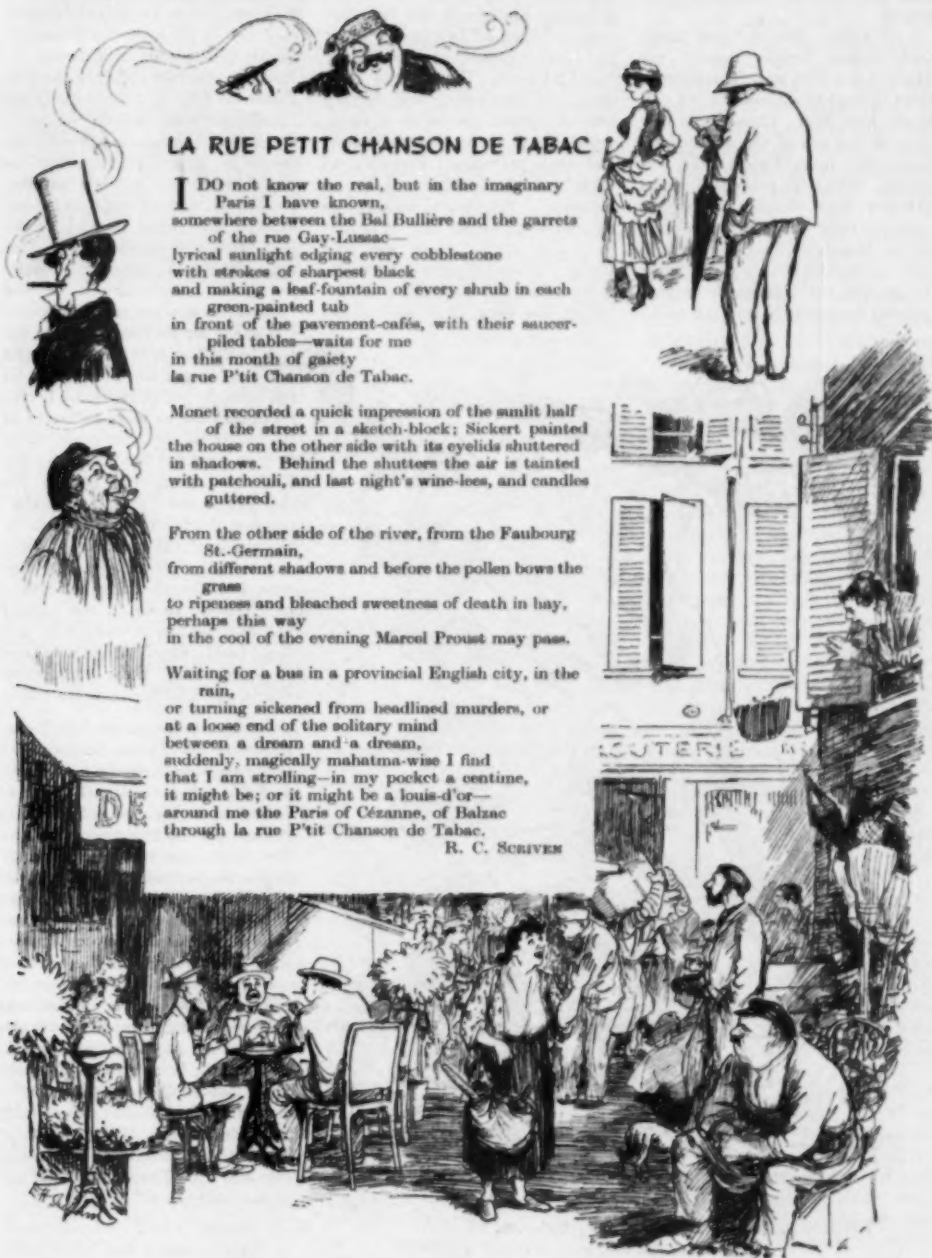
I DO not know the real, but in the imaginary Paris I have known, somewhere between the Bal Bullière and the garrets of the rue Gay-Lussac—lyrical sunlight edging every cobblestone with strokes of sharpest black and making a leaf-fountain of every shrub in each green-painted tub in front of the pavement-café, with their saucer-piled tables—waits for me in this month of gaiety la rue P'tit Chanson de Tabac.

Monet recorded a quick impression of the sunlit half of the street in a sketch-block; Sickert painted the house on the other side with its eyelids shuttered in shadows. Behind the shutters the air is tainted with patchouli, and last night's wine-lees, and candles guttered.

From the other side of the river, from the Faubourg St.-Germain, from different shadows and before the pollen bows the grass to ripeness and bleached sweetness of death in hay, perhaps this way in the cool of the evening Marcel Proust may pass.

Waiting for a bus in a provincial English city, in the rain, or turning sickened from headlined murders, or at a loose end of the solitary mind between a dream and a dream, suddenly, magically mahatma-wise I find that I am strolling—in my pocket a centime, it might be; or it might be a louis-d'or—around me the Paris of Cézanne, of Balzac through la rue P'tit Chanson de Tabac.

R. C. SCRIVEN



good behaviour never gets into the papers.

All right. But, for one thing, these infant Drakes restrict the liberties of grown-ups. This column tried to land at a favourite old pub in the East End. There was a new door at the top of the water-stairs (an ancient right of way) and it was locked. Why? To prevent the idiot children from flinging themselves into the river. A beautiful stretch of the Regent's Canal, they say, is to be spoiled by a mighty iron fence, to prevent the children from trespassing dangerously into the canal.

If we are not careful all zoos will be shut. In a single week one child had a finger bitten off by caged wolves; and another had his arm mauled by caged leopards. The habit of meddling and trespassing and defying printed notices grows on a child, especially if he is seldom caught and never corrected. Probably, in these sad cases, there will be no lawsuits. But what makes this column laugh rather bitterly is that in many similar cases the first instinct of lax or inefficient parents is to abuse the authorities for injuring the dear little malefactor.

If any parent feels like suing a zoo for young Albert's injuries he should read the decision of the House of Lords in the case of *Edwards v. Railway Executive*, reported in *The Times* on July 12. A boy of nine "made his way through the fence dividing the recreation ground from the railway and climbed up the embankment on to the railway track." He crossed the rails (which included live ones), tripped on the way back, was caught and had an arm cut off. We must all be sorry for the boy, especially as he was "dared" by another young imbecile; but to sue the Railway and take the case to the House of Lords seems to put the Accent on Youth a little too strongly. The House of Lords, no doubt, are as compassionate as the rest of us, but they prefer sense to sentiment and they found for the Railway Executive. Though the defendants had "again and again" mended the fence when broken by the children, the astonishing claim was that the young boys had trespassed so often that they had a kind of "licence" to be on the railway and so a right to be protected. But the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Goddard, said these memorable words, which perhaps deserve italics:

"Repeated trespass of itself confers no licence. The owner of a garden in the neighbourhood of a town knows probably only too well that it will be raided by young and old to gather flowers, nuts or mushrooms whenever they get the opportunity. But because he does not crown his garden wall with chevaux de frise, or put a number of keepers to chase away intruders, how is it to be said that he has licensed what he cannot prevent? Nor can I see, if he knows the trespassers are children, that he is under any obligation to ask their schoolmasters to lecture them on the subject, and he would surely be an optimist if he supposed that would do any good. In this respect, children, small boys especially, resemble burglars; if they want to get in they will, take what precautions one may . . . The injured child was a mere trespasser."

Parents and schoolmasters, please copy—and read aloud daily.
A. P. H.



"The form is to split up into small groups and wander in casual so they won't twig anything . . ."



OF all visitors to the United States from outer space, those who were touring around over Washington last month were undoubtedly the most intelligent. Their saucers were much faster than earlier models seen in this country, their lights were more variously and gaily colored, and the ease with which they pulled away from our jet planes bespoke not only a high standard of engineering and design but also a commendable quality of spacemanship. Their repeated appearances on the radar screen were obviously not unintentional; the resulting attempts at interception and pursuit by the Air Force seemed deliberately courted, possibly for the purpose of establishing comparative speeds. Where previous arrivals from other worlds have contented themselves with outrunning the ordinary transport planes of the commercial airlines, the Washington expedition was willing to pit itself against the best we have, and the outcome was impressive. The demands of an extended cruising radius, a vexing problem in all logistics, seemed to present no difficulty to these visitors, who were able—possibly after several light-years en route—to dawdle over Washington for a week or more, apparently still possessed of ample fuel and stores for the long trip home. Since no forced landings were reported (up to this writing), the inference is inescapable that the entire expedition began its return without mishap, despite atmospheric and gravitational

conditions which must have been novel to most of the personnel. (Washington, for example, is listed by the Foreign Office as an unhealthy post, and July there is extremely hot and humid, even at night.)

The occupants of the saucers were evidently still bound by a "no fraternization" policy. None disembarked, and nothing was learned about their appearance or their numbers. The great speed of the saucers militated against detailed observation, but from the closest encounter, in which a travelling salesman driving on a highway in the Middle West was forced to ditch his car to avoid collision with the visitors, one learns that the latest saucer is about 400 feet long and changes its lights, or more properly effulgence, from yellow to brown—all hands to collision stations!—in time of crisis. It was suggested that the

near - accident in this case was caused by the salesman's failure to dip his own lights, but his report was necessarily incoherent and needs further inquiry. Few experiences would be more unnerving than being suddenly bathed in brown light from a flying saucer, on a lonely road in the dark.

It was heartening to hear from the Air Force that "so-called flying saucers constitute no menace to the United States." Less easy to evaluate was the behaviour of the four flying "cylinders" photographed from the U.S. Coast Guard air station at Salem, Massachusetts. Noticing "a flash" in the sky at around 10 a.m. in clear weather, a photographer on duty tossed up his camera and made a hasty snapshot in that direction, although he could see nothing in the air. His film proved to have recorded "four

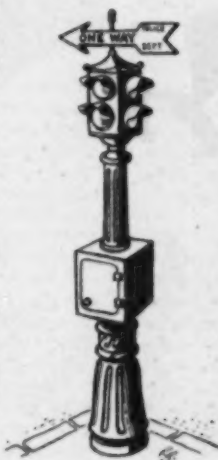
dark objects," cylindrical in form, of which three were in a tight formation, with the fourth slightly above and to the rear in the rôle of Tail End Charlie. These were first reported as "white and egg-shaped," but this may have been a reference to the negative instead of the print. At any rate, the four-cylinder formation was not seen again.

That the Washington expedition was fully informed about life in the United States was evident in its timing. Only sound showmanship and a real understanding of public relations could have brought the visitors to Washington in the dull interval after the Chicago conventions and before the opening of the election campaigns. It would have made little sense to accomplish so notable a voyage only to find the public indoors watching its TV and the newspapers crammed to bursting with politics. As it worked out, late July was just the right time to claim the undivided attention of Americans, although King Farouk proved troublesome for a day or two.

Unfortunately, owing to the unilateral nature of communications with space at this time, the Washington expedition trespassed into several restricted flying areas. Radar observers noted their blips in the prohibited zone over the White House, and other critical defence areas were violated—thoughtlessly perhaps, yet without so much as a by-your-leave. There was also the baffling stratagem of the saucer which suddenly established itself as a ground light, in consequence of which the pursuing jet pilot very nearly crashed his plane.

But one must applaud, on the whole, the expedition's wise decision to show itself over the nation's capital instead of hanging back, as the previous outer space vessels have seen fit to do in the hinterland or the

AMERICAN VIEWPOINT



more suggestible areas of California. The awareness that our seat of government has been singled out, uniquely, for prolonged scrutiny by beings from another world must stir in every bosom a new sense of pride—and humility.

Meanwhile, the California earthquake, the continued hot weather and drought, and the interval when it seemed that the voters might have to choose between Senator Taft and a Southern Democrat for their next President—these conspired to lend to July a jittery effect which may persist until the football

season begins, and in any case until the World Series.

While defence and security agencies were more seriously preoccupied, the Office of Price Stabilization embarked lightheartedly on an attempt to collect upwards of a million from a dozen New York night clubs. The places, said the O.P.S., had overcharged not only for drinks but even for food served to patrons. Worse, the defendants had, in some instances, experienced lower food costs *without passing them along to the customers*. Most

New Yorkers had believed that night club charges are based on how much money the waiter estimates the customer has with him, and it was something of a shock to learn that a system of "prices" had been in force all along. But the notion that lower food costs could somehow have been made to benefit the patrons was absurd to all: when it comes to measuring that part of such a saving that a successful night club would pass along to its customers, it is plain that the currency system contains no monetary unit that small.

CHARLES W. MORTON



THE MAN I SAW

THE man I saw the other day
Was very tall and thin;
His body barely hid the soul
That burned so fierce within.
He was a man of genius
Or else a man of sin.

He was a man who had not known
His children round his knee;
His eyes were far too red and fierce,
His spirit far too free;
He could not clean a pair of shoes
Or make a cup of tea.

He stood upon the public road
Beneath the moving skies;
His brow was furrowed deep with thought,
His mouth was drawn, his eyes
Were rather pouchy round the lids
And full of wild surmise.

He stood upon the public road,
Not looking left or right,
And held the pole, designed in bands
Of red and black and white,
Another man was looking at
With a theodolite.

The other man looked at the pole
And wrote upon a tray,
But he looked at the absolute
A dozen feet away;
And I looked at the pair of them
And thought of things to say.

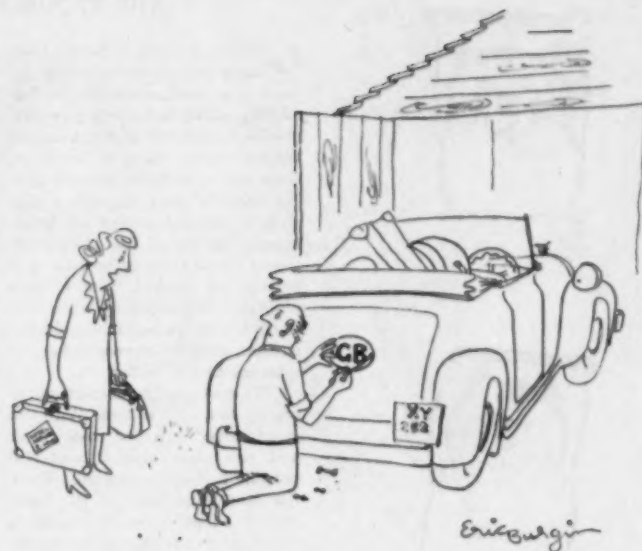
And each of us, as best he could,
Was working for his pay.
P. M. HUBBARD

STANCE

PEOPLE writing to the Press lately have expressed a good deal of concern about the correct stance to be adopted for various professions and trades. And well, I am thinking to myself as I stand, rocking on my heels, toes well turned out but with my weight evenly distributed over the window sill and gripping a damp cloth between my teeth, they might be.

However. Particular reference was made in the correspondence to viola players and bankers. I didn't know—although I might have suspected—that my bank manager possibly adopts the wrong stance when he greets me. I hadn't realized that he should have depended on footwork as well as the ability to do hurried calculations in his head. And while I admit that the correct attitude for the banker to take up might be almost anything—or rather (if I may make an amendment while trying to nod without moving my head at Mrs. Arbuthnot passing below) anything that enables him to strike a balance—I do know that lightness of foot, flexibility of the knee, and possibly swerve are surely necessary.

If he were not a banker but a viola player, it is to be imagined, the stance would be entirely different; even a tympanist would be uneasy, I decide—trying to control a sudden fit of trembling—if not badly handicapped, with the footwork applicable to a banker or a window cleaner. It is not enough apparently to tuck the viola under the chin and play it. It seems that a viola player who has studied his stance—who has, so to speak, complete control of his feet—can extract a more decisive note from the top part of his instrument by, quite simply, moving his feet in such a way that his reach is lengthened. I mean that a viola player who is content to stand on the concert platform—well away from the tympanist—and move merely his fingers and arms (and occasionally his trunk) has not properly learned his profession.



"Shouldn't it be in French?"

It hasn't occurred to him—unless he reads his newspapers—that he might have produced a deeper *timbre* and saved himself a good deal of unnecessary strain by bending one knee, shuffling into a stooping position, or even widening the stance to give greater resiliency; so that *pressing*, the bugbear of viola players, is eliminated.

In his own home (and assuming that he has to take a part in domestic duties) the viola player would no doubt find that the concert platform stance has to be modified for cleaning, say, the outsides of the sitting-room windows. What arrangement, he and I might ask, trying not to scramble for hand-holds, is required to clean that part of the window which, no matter what system of raising and lowering the sashes is adopted, is always just out of reach? Well—up on the toes, of course, but what then? The balancing on the ball of the left foot while the right is lifted slightly from the sill to give a wider sweep? Or—and here the

professional window cleaner might frown—the *splay*, the firm fixing of each foot against the sides of the window itself and the edging up in the manner of a man climbing out of a well or up the inside of a chimney without a ladder! It's hard to say.

The whole question, I maintain, watching the damp cloth dropping to the front doorstep below, is complicated by the consideration of the stance of one who is—and this is more common than might be supposed—both a bank manager and an amateur window cleaner; and there is so far no published solution to the problem of such a one who may also be muscle-bound—as I think I am now. Yet it must be agreed that here is something which might revolutionize accepted procedure in taking the pram downstairs, laying linoleum—or (in my case) the method of jumping lightly back into the room without having to fall forward on my face.

FERGUSON MACLAY

THE TROUBLE WITH CHINA

GUESTS to lunch or dinner have been out of the question for some time, ever since the Sunday afternoon debacle involving a vegetable dish, two meat plates, a ring at the door suspected to be the vicar, and a cat neglectful of its kerb drill. We tried to carry on with a misguided wedding-present of handsomely illustrated fish plates, but guests making hearty inroads on a helping of stewed plums were noticed to flag suddenly when confronted, through a thinning film of custard, with the reproachful eye of a turbot in full colour.

We continued to have guests to tea, up to a total of two. With one green-striped cup, one rose cluster and two plain blue it was still possible to form a quorum. Then, the other day, one of the blues detached itself from its handle in mid-flight to the plate rack. Scooping up its remains, we knew that the time had come to overhaul the whole position, from sugar-bowl to gravy-boat.

It was our expectation, now that we had reached this long overdue decision, that the local crockery trade would be delighted. It wasn't. The man in the shop, who was gloomy and of that unnatural immobility induced by a life in which a rash gesture may mean the deduction of a cut-glass lemonade set from Friday's pay-packet, made it clear that people couldn't simply walk into a china shop and buy china. There was an export drive on, that was the trouble with china, and we could count ourselves lucky

to find him with a couple of easeroles to rub together. It just happened that he had our requirements in the window, a combination dinner and tea service which he described, in no sense happily, as a "cracking little set." That, and a service in mauve and gold not yet uncrated, was the lot.

When we said we should like a closer look at the service in the window he pretended at first to regard the suggestion as frivolous. It was some time before he passed grudgingly through the glass door, holding his coat skirts close and stepping among the frail exhibits like a gazelle over a carpet of mustard gas. The specimen, when he brought it much later, seemed strong, and the design, unoffensively pink, resisted rubbing off by the thumb, both gloved and raw. "Forty-two pieces," he chanted glumly, when we expressed our readiness to deal. It was as if he was warning us about the washing-up in store. But we were adamant, even when he mentioned the price, so he began to haul the pieces out of the window with joyless deliberation.

Laid out on our dining-room table an hour later they made an impressive display. It isn't often nowadays that one sees a table laid for dinner and tea for six people. We had washed it all up and were beginning to worry about shelf-space when we missed the dishes. We studied the pink-tinted kitchen from all angles. No dishes. Neither meat nor pudding nor vegetable. Any guests dropping in for a snack



would have to take their peas from the small yellow mixing-bowl, their prunes from a soup plate. It would spoil things.

When we telephoned the man and pointed out that he had forgotten the dishes he laughed, a thing we should never have expected in him. "But," he said, when he had recovered a little, "you've got the tea set, see?" "You mean," we said, "that we're supposed to serve the joint in the tea-pot?" He wasn't amused by this. "You can't have it both ways, you know," he said, a touch of the schoolmaster in his manner—"not a tea set and dishes, you can't, not in a combination set, now, can you?" We saw that we had been slow. "You mean," we said, "that there *aren't* any dishes?" He replied evasively that he wouldn't say that. Dishes might be found. It might take a few months, of course, because of the export drive. That was the trouble with china...

When we took the dinner service back for exchange with the mauve-and-gold, now featured as a window display, he was his former gloomy self. Nothing funny had happened to him since our telephone call. He watched unmoved as we carried in the pink, dishless stack from the car. He dragged the replacements, with dishes, out of the window with the same joyless deliberation as before.

The new service was not one that we should have bought in a free market. The mauve was heavily predominant. But, laid out on the dining-table, it had an acceptable if doleful homogeneity. We had washed it all up and were beginning to worry about shelf-space when the man rang up in a state bordering on hysteria and demanded to know why we had not returned the tea service. We said, surprised but courteous, that we liked the tea service and would keep it; we had decided not to worry about its not matching the dinner service; after all, we—

He shouted at us. We got the impression that he was dancing. How did we suppose, he demanded, that he could sell a dinner set without dishes, unless he had a tea set



to make it up to forty-two pieces? Were we trying to get him fired? Did we realize that by keeping back the old tea set and taking away the new dinner set we were acquiring *no less than sixty-four pieces*? The new dinner set, counting dishes and lids, was complete, did we understand, COMPLETE! His voice rose to a scream.

A desire to forestall the man's discharge with ignominy was not our sole motive for returning the tea service within the hour—we had noticed by that time, and we put it to him bluntly, that the new dinner service had no side plates.

"Side plates?" said the man.

"Side plates. Bread and butter plates. Call them what you will, there aren't any. You forgot to—"

"Look," said the man, tapping his palm with a green pot salad-server—"you've got dishes, ain't you? Forty-two pieces, you've got, complete, counting lids, see?"

"Very likely," we said. "But that doesn't—"

"Side plates, side plates," said the man, in an exasperated soliloquy.

Then, with a sudden weariness: "What folks mostly do, they use the side plates from a matching tea set, see? That's what—"

We hadn't got a matching tea set, we said, conscious of behaving with fine restraint. We hadn't got a tea set at all. "Unless," we added, with a glance round the underpopulated shelves—"unless you could possibly—"

He turned away to conceal his satisfaction.

"Not a chance," he said. "That's where it is, see?"

We returned the new dinner service the following morning, early. The man seemed glad to see it again, and handed back our cheque with a snort of inscrutable significance. And as we drove away he stood behind the glass door of the shop with a face of malevolent glee.

So please don't think, if you drop in on us for a snack any time, that we are mean, or uncultivated, or discourteous, or even terribly, terribly poor. There's nothing we can do. It's the export drive. That's the trouble with china.

J. B. BOOTHROYD

CHALK AND CHEESE

CHALK is less different from cheese
Than sycamores from elder-trees.
The former are of different stuff,
And that is difference enough;
The latter, though, are one in kind
But in a different state of mind.
Like brother and contentious brother
They cannot tolerate each other.
Says sycamore, Call *that* a trunk,
So twisted, narrow-girthed and shrunk?
Says elder, crouching by the wall,
What, *that* a tree, so thick and tall?

But for their fixity of pose,
These most implacable of foes,
The elder-tree and sycamore,
Might, man-like, fall to mutual war.
While cheerful chalk and fruitful cheese
Are no such bitter enemies;

Chalk by the side of cheese may dwell
Untroubled by his neighbour's smell;
Cheese with unenvious applause
May greet the lines the other draws,
Knowing no hand will ever spread
His rival on a chunk of bread.

But sycamores and elder-trees
Differ by details and degrees,
Like robber-wasps from bumble-bees,
Or Gothic screen from Attic frieze,
Or Iroquois from Cherokees,
Or Burgundy from Vermouth-lees,
Or aubergines from frozen peas,
Or Shaw from Aristophanes,
Or miner's wage from doctor's fees,
Or Chinaman from Japanese.
Much more alike are chalk and cheese
Than ill-matched cousins such as these.

R. P. LISTER



At the Play

The Happy Marriage (DUKE OF YORK'S)—In Chancery (ARTS)

IT is a summer morning on a roof-garden, and the play, *The Happy Marriage*, is as airy as the set: an uncommonly good set by Mr. LAURENCE IRVING, with a London panorama that at the last softens to a nocturne beneath a crescent moon. Mr. JOHN CLEMENTS, who has based his piece on a French comedy, would not claim that it is more than lightly farcical-to-and-fro, another joke at the expense of psychiatry: on the whole an amiable joke, even if it becomes long in the telling.

The idea is that a happy marriage can appear anything but happy when a psychiatrist gets to work. Here the husband and wife are Mr. CLEMENTS and Miss KAY HAMMOND. They are in the clutch of a practitioner for whom Mr. CHARLES LLOYD PACK offers the face of an angry owl. None can find more humour in a humourless man: it is worth going to the Duke of York's to hear Mr. PACK as he expresses horror at the very thought of such a thing as "a normal relationship," a notion that (if accepted) would shake psychiatry to its roots.

The most profitable scene is in the first act, with solemn owl advising plaintive turtle-dove. Miss HAMMOND's voice is a quivering coo: she blinks and flutters while Mr. PACK bombards her with jargon and

hints from mythology. It is no less cheerful when Mr. CLEMENTS, harried by a suddenly suspicious turtle-dove, is forced into making an embarrassing and foolish telephone call.

There are some inventive comic performances here; Miss FRANCES ROWE and Mr. MICHAEL SHEPLEY add to them later as another married couple, a pair of "best friends" who find themselves involved in the

what Gilbert's Lord Chancellor called "pretty young wards in Chancery." All the time he has a wife at home in Gravesend. (He had left her at Brixton, but no matter).

The fooling may be rougher than in PINERO's later farces; it is no less ready. *In Chancery*, which derives from 1885, is roystering nonsense in itself, and an indication of the master-farceur to be. Mr. JOHN FERNALD has staged it with



Helen Manvell-Smith—Miss KAY HAMMOND

Doctor Protheroe—Mr. CHARLES LLOYD PACK

Henry Manvell-Smith—Mr. JOHN CLEMENTS

(The Happy Marriage)

matrimonial maze. Mr. SHEPLEY's forced wooing, in a gruff staccato, helps a third act that begins to tire. Indeed the best of the play is early in the evening while Mr. PACK, in a sepulchral grave-digger voice, urges us to "delve into the depths of the psyche." We miss him at the end; but the acting throughout is so light and gay that it may very well take *The Happy Marriage* (which the producer, Mr. CLEMENTS, has touched along airily) towards established success.

A psychiatrist—Mr. PACK for preference—would have had fun with the hapless traveller in gas-brackets who is at the core of PINERO's early farce, *In Chancery*. The poor fellow has lost his memory in a railway accident. Soon he is both on the verge of marriage to a massive Irish colleen, and suspected of elopement with one of

full period apparatus. Three performances especially keep us contented. Mr. REGINALD PURDELL, sufferer from amnesia, acts like a grave sleepwalker: now and then he wakes to ruminate on his odd position, and goes off again. It is enjoyably weighed-and-measured fooling; Mr. PURDELL keeps throughout a voice as prim as one of his own gas-brackets. Miss VALERIE HANSON behaves with an air of outraged decorum as an errant ward in Chancery; and Mr. TOKE TOWNLEY's private inquiry agent is a slithering slug.

Recommended

The Deep Blue Sea (Duc'ann) as a poignant straight play; *Relative Values* (Savoy) as a brisk Coward comedy; and the fantasy of *Under the Sycamore Tree* (Aldwych) for the sake of Mr. Alec Guinness.

J. C. TREWIN



(In Chancery)

Montague Jolliffe—

MR. REGINALD PURDELL



At the Pictures

Room for One More—The Thing from Another World

MY first inclination this week was to ignore the one new feature film altogether. And yet... as mere entertainment, let alone as an example of all kinds of technical skill, *Room for One More* (Director: NORMAN TAUROG) doesn't deserve to be ignored. I may think it contains far too much sentimentality, but the happy laughter among the audience at the Press show—mostly not, I think, from the Press—indicates that the

with several grains of cynicism the extreme case with which the two adopted children shown here respond to a short course of family love. The most entertaining bits of the film are isolated scenes that have little to do with the main theme. I remember with pleasure a fight with a self-inflating rubber dinghy that the husband tries to hide in his desk at the office, and there are other moments of good fun, acted and directed with brilliant competence.

is of the kind that is introduced to relieve tension, for "The Thing" itself is plainly supposed to be horrifying (the film has an "X" certificate); but it is effective in its own right, luckily, for the truly horrific aspects of the subject don't seem to get over at all. They ought to, for the idea of the possible presence among men of a purely vegetable living thing, strong, active, almost indestructible, with no brain or emotions but an insatiable thirst



Jimmy John CLIFFORD TATUM, JR.; Jane IRIS MANN; Teenie GEORGE WINSTON; Tris GAY GORDON; Tim MALCOLM CANNELL; Anna BETSY DRAKE; Poppy CARY GRANT

picture will have no trouble at all in pleasing a considerable public. It will be a proportion, not all, of the same public that delighted in *Cheaper by the Dozen* and *Belles on Their Toes*; this is essentially the same sort of picture, but in many places cruder, more obvious, less unostentatiously aimed at the centres of easy emotion. Again it is based on a piece of autobiography (the book by ANNA ROSE) and includes representations of real people—BETSY DRAKE plays Mrs. Rose herself, CARY GRANT plays her husband; and this fact, as usual, means that everybody in the story is overpoweringly nice, any traits of character suggested being lovable eccentricities rather than basic human qualities observed with detachment. The children turn out to be particularly nice, it being a contention of the book apparently that all children are, even the most superficially vicious and sullen little savages needing only sympathetic treatment to become angels of sweetness and nobility. This may conceivably be so; but one doesn't have, to be a misanthrope to take

On the whole, though, the picture is for unthinking sentimentalists.

The Thing from Another World (Director: CHRISTIAN NYBY)—from the way it's announced one might conclude that they would prefer to put the last three words in brackets, as with a song-title—is no great work of film art, but it has a good many points of interest. Nobody could pretend, for example, that it isn't, in one way and another, amusing, and far more often deliberately than involuntarily funny. The fun

for human blood—this idea is by no means a comforting one. One mistake was to give us glimpses of the Thing itself, looking not much worse than a large gorilla in a diving-suit. Where the film succeeds is (I have noted this before with "science-fiction") in its well imagined and presented—and amusing—details of the new phenomenon's effect on everyday life and routine. But it does seem a bit hard that an intruder so radioactive ("This Geiger counter's going crazy") should succumb in the end to dear old nineteenth-century electricity.

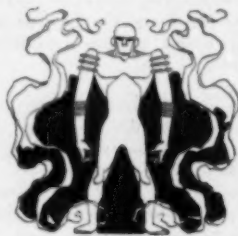
Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

One of the best things in London is CARNÉ's twelve-year-old *Hotel du Nord*. With this is the other new film of the week, *The Big Top*, a Russian colour picture of a circus, with some impressive acts.

Releases: *Penny Princess* (30/7/52) is an unpretentious comedy brightened by YOLANDE DONLAN. And *Gone With the Wind* (8/5/40) is reissued, if you feel energetic.

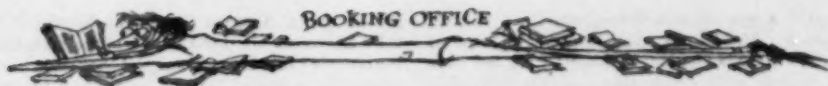
RICHARD MALLETT



(The Thing from Another World)

Super-Mandrake

The Thing—JAMES ARNESS



King George V: His Life and Reign. Harold Nicolson.
Constable, 42/-.

THE authorized biography of His Late Majesty King George V was entrusted to two different writers and has appeared in two separate instalments. In 1941 Mr. John Gore produced a personal memoir dealing with the King's character, domestic life and hobbies. It was an unexpected portrait. The Press had done no service to the Monarchy by muffling George V's colourful personality under conventional adulation and trivial anecdote. The public thought of him as a decent, hard-working, honourable man who rather lacked initiative and vitality. Mr. Gore showed that whatever criticisms could be made of him—and his own self-criticisms were ludicrously severe—he was certainly not dull or feeble. Kindly, humorous, explosive, violently prejudiced but rigidly fair-minded in public business, hot-tempered and magnanimous, old-fashioned yet humbly anxious to understand where he could not approve, he emerged as a rumbustiously attractive figure. One finished the book not with tepidly "correct" feelings but with awe-struck respect and even affection.

Now Mr. Harold Nicolson has described his public career. He has spent years of hard work among the voluminous royal archives and checked his interpretation by consulting those who were brought into intimate relations with the King. Like Mr. Gore, he has departed from the old tradition that royal biographies should be written in a style of flat panegyric; he has also avoided the opposite danger of copying Strachey. A better historian than Strachey and a fairer-minded man, Mr. Nicolson is serious, readable and often entertaining. His book is good Nicolson as well as being good biography.

He did not have an easy assignment. To give a full history of the reign would have swamped the central figure. He has wisely concentrated on events that illustrate the development of constitutional monarchy, connecting his detailed examinations of limited topics by short narrative passages. On the exercise of the royal prerogative Mr. Nicolson has a good deal of new information and he quotes abundantly from letters and memoranda hitherto unpublished. The Parliament Act controversy, the Home Rule Bill, the negotiations leading to the Lloyd George Coalition, the selection of Mr. Baldwin as Prime Minister instead of Lord Curzon, the formation of the National Government of 1931 and the relations between the Crown and Dominion Governments after the Statute of Westminster are the main issues upon which Mr. Nicolson has new light to throw.

To ape detachment would not produce a good biography. Part of the value of his work is that he does not attempt to be inhumanly colourless. He does not conceal his own strong distrust of Lloyd George, his admiration for Lord Stamfordham and his support for

the earlier phases of the National Government. A biographer further to the Right or to the Left might have attempted to judge the actions of the Crown by a political creed. On the whole, Mr. Nicolson's various changes of Party allegiance have corresponded to a shift in the middle vote and he is no less representative of opinion in sometimes being healthily opinionated.

George V's letters and memoranda show his curious combination of qualities in operation. He adapted constitutional monarchy to changing conditions skilfully and far-sightedly. Time after time he was right. When he was wrong, Mr. Nicolson not only points it out but shows that he was wrong for reasons that, as a rule, did him credit.

The biography is full of agreeable detail: for example, Queen Victoria thought that William III was our greatest King; on the death of Bridges, Ramsay MacDonald wanted Housman to have the Laureateship; and Lloyd George called J. H. Thomas "the greatest blatherer living." Mr. Nicolson's style, the subject of mild argument in the past, is as personal, as amusedly urbane and as ebullient as ever. As usual, its note is muted by awe when the mysteries of the Old Diplomacy are approached. Perhaps the only serious weakness of this solidly learned book is its tendency to see economic issues in terms of personal relationships.

R. G. G. PRICE

The Fountains in Trafalgar Square. C. K. Munro.
Heinemann, 12/6

When the author entered the Civil Service nearly forty years ago his appointment was notified on a parchment bearing the name of the President of the Board of Trade with ten blank spaces beneath it. They



represented a non-existent Board, cherished only in imagination. Mr. Munro traces the development of the world's greatest national machine from the days of the copyist quill driver upwards, the fountains, playing from ten till five, recalling an old-time parallel with officials at work. The uninitiated may here learn how it is that even the dullest of Ministers can maintain an air of informedness in public, or what kind of scurrying goes on when an awkward question is asked in the House. In his cheerful account of professional reticence and precision of language and the humours and perils of delegated responsibility the author successfully combats some worn and fading prejudices. Old habits make him cautious in avoiding actual issues but his book is readable as well as accurate.

C. C. F.

The Inmates. By John Cowper Powys. Macdonald, 12/6

Mr. John Cowper Powys long ago set up residence far from the busy, over-crowded main road of contemporary fiction. For many his particular mansion has been difficult to reach, since the traveller has to struggle to get there; and his new novel, *The Inmates*, which describes an imaginary lunatic asylum and its guests with quite appalling power and inventiveness, will be found a hair-raising experience. But anyone who wishes to understand what lies beyond the veils of so-called sanity must spend a few hours in the precincts of "Glint Hall." John Hush, with his mania for cutting off a lock of hair from the head of every

girl he meets, Antenna Shear who killed her father, the ambivalent Mr. Lordy, may all be mad as far as the outside world is concerned, yet they seem to inhabit worlds far richer in fantasy, colour and poetry than the sane. And, set beside them, the sane members of Glint Hall—the doctor in charge who experiments on live dogs which are flung into a pit to die, or Father Toby with his frustrations—seem no more psychologically sound than their "guests." Decidedly, *The Inmates* will make people think long and hard and, perhaps, change their minds about what goes on in such institutions.

R. K.

British Popular Ballads. Edited by John E. Housman. Harp, 10/6

One can think of the ballad as folk-song, singable like "Lord Randal" or unsingably long like "Chevy Chase"; or as the "poem in short stanzas narrating a popular story" of the *Oxford Dictionary*. Dr. Housman, who did not live to see his scholarly little book published, deals mainly with the former class: a ballad derived from dance-song and narrative poetry, handed down from mouth to mouth, and, by the time it gets to us, anonymous. He provides a happy choice of traditional ballads and a detailed account of their ancestors and kindred, native and foreign. He glances at later ballad-writers (the Romantics, the Pre-Raphaelites and two contemporaries), but omits Oscar Wilde and G. K. C.; and at American variants of old ballads, ignoring such vigorous young stock as "Frankie and Johnnie." It would have been amusing to have proved the ballad's protean vitality by quoting one medieval story in Georgian form—say "Young Beichan" disguised as "Lord Bateman."

H. P. E.

SHORTER NOTES

Portrait of a Flying Yorkshireman. Letters from Eric Knight in the United States to Paul Rotha in England. Chapman and Hall, 18/-. From a Yorkshire village Eric Knight was whirled by circumstance into the "brilliance, colour and sweep of masquerade" of pre-war Hollywood. The portrait that emerges from his letters is that of a man realizing the madness that must and did culminate in war. It is the portrait of a sensitive, intelligent, extremely likeable man, gifted above the average with the power of expression, and through these letters speaking for all his kind, the men whose deaths constitute the heaviest price humanity has yet paid for its folly.

The Best of Boulestin. Edited by Elvin and Maurice Firuski. Heinemann, 21/-. What recollections of incomparable meals are evoked by Mr. and Mrs. Firuski's admirable selection of recipes by that brilliant wit, writer and amateur de cuisine Marcel Boulestin, to whose memory Mr. Firuski pays graceful and grateful tribute! Happily, recollections can be made realities even in hard times, with Boulestin's aid, by practising his precept "Economy is a basic rule in French cooking." A book cheap at any price.

No Bail for the Judge. Henry Cecil. Chapman and Hall, 12/6. Another ingenious mixture of law and fantasy from the author of "The Painswick Line." Seamy background light-heartedly handled. Villains ingeniously hounded down. Occasional pleas for legal reform less effective than they deserve because out of key with the prevailing gaiety. When Mr. Cecil can laugh seriously he will be formidable.

The Baby Snatcher. Carol Kendall. Bodley Head, 9/6. Kidnapping and murder in American university town defeated by gang of juvenile baby-watchers led by twelve-year-old "Drawers," as scholarly in conversation and ingenious in action as in "The Black Seven." Very entertaining and full of inventive detection. Pity the solution is so unconvincing.



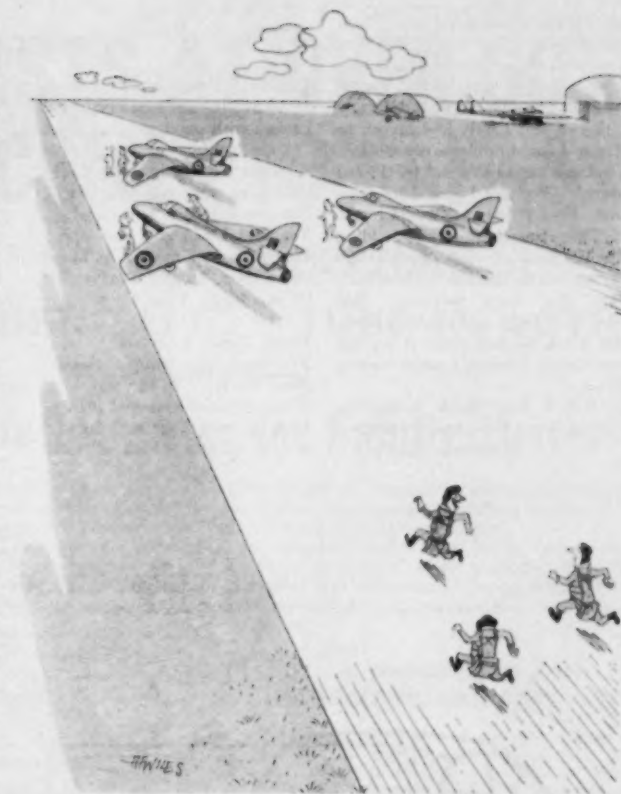
BE IT NEVER SO
HUMDRUM

MY mother wrote and said she was very cross with me. Why had I been so unkind to Willie Harrison? My mother had always liked Mrs. Harrison, and now she didn't know how she was ever going to look her in the face again. Willie was a very nice boy. My mother remembered the first time she met him; she was visiting his mother and he asked her if she was cold and brought her another cushion. He was wonderful to his mother. My mother invited him to tea the last time I came home for the week-end because she just thought I would like to meet him. I hadn't been very nice to him even then, but when he asked me out to dinner and I went, and brought him in afterwards, she really thought I liked him. Now I had written him that unkind letter.

I wrote back and said Willie Harrison was a drip. I hadn't written him an unkind letter at all. He wrote and asked me if I would join the Circle of Musical Friends in the village and go to the meetings whenever I came home and I wrote back and said no. And if she really wanted to know, I had only gone out to dinner with him because we were having rice pudding at home. And as it turned out I would rather have had rice pudding at home. And I didn't bring him in afterwards—he came in.

My mother wrote back and said she was horrified. Was I a gold-digger??? Had I only been using Willie? If I was going to go through life like that men would find me out and I would be left a sour old maid with a bitter taste. Rice pudding was rich in vitamins and if I didn't eat it and insisted on living on a tin I would get consumption. My mother had made the rice pudding on purpose. She wasn't going to let me die of consumption.

And Willie wasn't a drip. That wasn't at all a kind thing to say. He was a nice, sensible boy who would do well one day in his father's business. He had simply splendid prospects and I was very short-



"Last one up to forty thousand feet's a sissy!"

sighted. He was steady and reliable, but if I was determined only to marry somebody like an explorer or a deep-sea diver then I would just have to get on with it. I thought my life would be one continuous round of excitement if I married an explorer, didn't I? Well, that was just what it would be. I would spend my whole life struggling from one desert to another, carrying my tent, being bitten, and living on birds' nests and crocodile meat. And my mother would never see my children. They would grow up half-wild and would have rickets. My mother wouldn't marry an explorer if I paid her. And she was willing to bet

anything that I didn't even know any explorers.

I wrote and said I didn't.

My mother wrote and said there I was then! She knew I didn't. I was chasing a will o' the wisp and if it turned round and bit me it was my own fault.

Why didn't I just write a nice letter to Willie! Just a short one. She hardly dared go out now because people kept asking her how Willie and I were getting on. She didn't know what she was going to do. It was very thoughtless of me. How was she to know I would be so silly and stubborn?

She wrote again a few days

later. Well, it was all over now. There was nothing she could do. There was nothing anybody could do. It was out of everybody's hands. Willie had become engaged to Nancy Williams and I only had myself to blame. I couldn't blame my mother. Goodness knows she had tried hard enough. Perhaps I would be sorry now. Poor Willie. He would regret it. There was absolutely no holding Mrs. Williams, of course, and she had cut my mother dead at the butcher's only that very morning. But everybody was quite sympathetic and knew he had done it on the rebound so I needn't mind coming home.

But I don't think I shall be coming home for quite a while.

MARJORIE RIDDELE

INVOCATION

PUSSY, Pussy, here's a treat.
I have bought some Pussi-Mete!
Packed with goodness through and through,
Made for Pussies just like you!
See! I've cut a biggish slice,
But you'll gulp it in a trice!
Yes, and I will give you more,
Though it cost me one-and-four!
Come then, hungry Pussy! Eat
Of this lovely Pussi-Mete!

Pussy, Pussy, I declare
You have got a banquet there!
Read the label on the tin!
O the richness garnered in!
Protein, soya flour and fat,
Sodium nitrate—think of that—

Concentrate of barley malt,
Activated lime, and salt!
Well! If that was meant for me
Not a crumb by now there'd be!

Come then, Pussy, draw anear,
Greet the unseen with a cheer!
Everybody needs a change!
Greater joy from greater range!
What do they of England know
Who beyond it never go!
Sweet variety doth give
Colour to the life we live!
Welcome night, and welcome day—

Blast you, try it anyway!

ANDE



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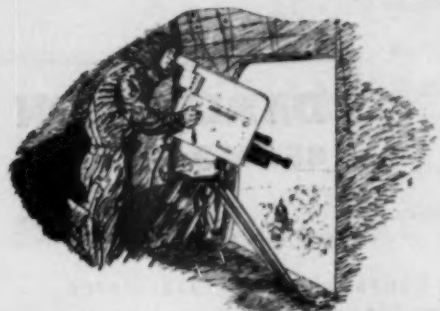
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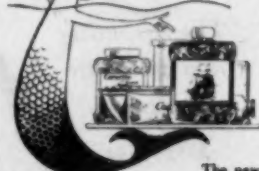
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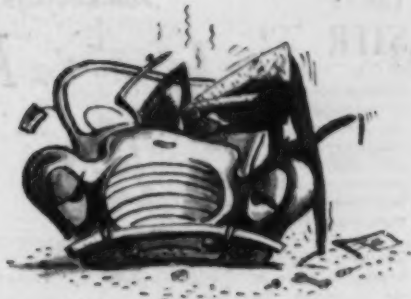
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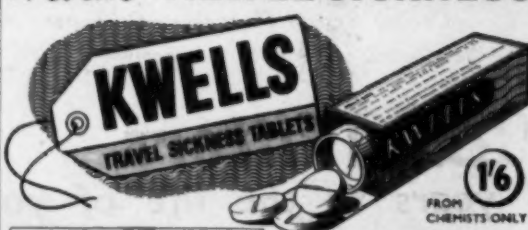
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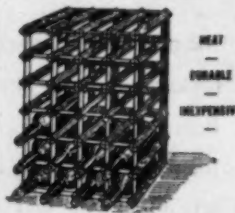


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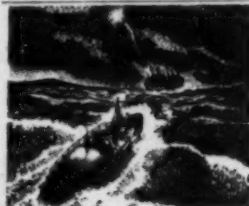
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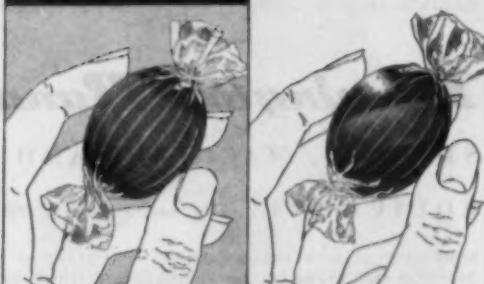
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